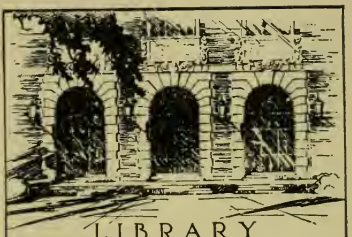

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS

x823
C873a
v.2

# ANKERWICK CASTLE.

A NOVEL.

*IN FOUR VOLUMES.*

BY

MRS. CROFTS.

*LET VIRTUE TRIUMPH.*

VOL. II.

*LONDON:*
PRINTED AT THE
[illegible],
FOR WILLIAM LANE, LEADENHALL-STREET.
1800.

x823
C873a
v.2

# ANKERWICK CASTLE.

## CHAP. I.

" MY DEAR BROTHER,

" I SIT down to desire you immediately to join the party at the Abbey.—What can keep you so long away? It is necessary you should be here at this time, to take off any suspicion.—Your letter gave me new life. Stirman Hausen is a rare fellow.—Do pray, Mr. Beaumont, suffer me to recommend another little bit of that tempting bread, and another cup of this most excellent Turkey coffee.—I really fear you will get quite fat and vulgar-looking.—I hear the air of ——— agrees vastly well with you—

infinitely better than that of Ankerwick.—Come, come, thou dear brother, ſurely we were born for the aſſiſtance of each other.—We have helped ourſelves to our revenge, thanks to our kind ſtars!—Well, my Lord, give me the credit I deſerve;—is it not a plan worthy the greateſt ſtateſman on earth? Did I not combine all its parts, unite each link of the chain ſo exactly, and fitted them ſo completely, that the greateſt maſter of the art could not have made a better finiſh?—I am beginning to think of the heir at law to this proud woman's poſſeſſions;—I believe it is the little Charles Middleton, her couſin, though in all conſcience he will be rich enough: if they were to come to ſome poor devil, it would be a very great ſalve to both my conſcience and your's; for I verily believe this inſulting beauty will not recover the fate of Beaumont.—Poor Beaumont! I once loved him; but avaunt pity! revenge is the word!—Come, I ſay again, come to the Abbey.—Why will you abſent yourſelf?—Men are

the

the greateſt fools in nature when they have not women to guide them.—Adieu!

" MARY BERKLEY."

---

" Oh!" exclaimed the Marquis, " that Lady Middleton and Lady Mary Berkley ſhould be of the ſame ſpecies! but one is the honour, the other the diſgrace of the ſex.—Proud woman!—Thou dæmon! doſt thou call proud this humble, affable, matchleſs woman? By Heaven I will fix a dagger in thy vile heart for every pang thou haſt given her!—I here ſwear, by all that is ſacred, I will ſtab thy honour, thy character, as thou well knoweſt I can.—Thou ſhalt be known to be the vile thing thou art! How dareſt, thou profligate, thou abandoned, loſt to virtue, to innocence, long loſt to virtue, as I know thou art, how dareſt thou profane the name of this angel?—I will borrow a ſentence out of thy own vile letter—avaunt honour! vengeance is the

word!—Yes, I will purſue thee, thou wretch! I will make thee tremble at my preſence!—I am bound by no promiſe to keep thy ſecret—juſtice calls upon me to publiſh to the world what I know of thee. —Thou ſhalt not run thy courſe of wickedneſs with impunity; I will ſtop thy career ere thou bringeſt any more innocent people into priſons and death!"

The rage of the Marquis terrified Mademoiſelle M——; ſhe could not perfectly make out all he ſaid;—he ſtamped, he raged, fury was in his eyes.

"Ah, my Lor!" ſaid this ſweet girl, "what is the matter?"

"Ten thouſand pardons!" ſaid he, leading her to her ſeat; "I will now explain the cauſe."

He did ſo; ſhe was confounded.

"Alas!" ſaid ſhe, in French, "what miſchiefs

miſchiefs might not have befallen dear Lady Middleton and good Mr. Beaumont!—What a woman muſt this Lady Mary be!"

"A woman!" re-echoed the Marquis; "a devil, rather!"

"Diable!" ſaid Mademoiſelle M——, raiſing her hands in the action of horror.

The Marquis compoſed himſelf after the violent agitation he had been in from reading Lady Mary's letter, and pleaſantly aſked Mademoiſelle M—— if ſhe did not think they ſhould have much amuſement from the arrival of the ſelf-created Mrs. Beaumont? The idea of a wife having never ſeen her huſband, was a matter of infinite entertainment to them.

The party ſoon returned from riding;—it was one of thoſe fiercely hot days in the month of Auguſt. They could not remain long under the burning rays of the ſun, though their ride was a green one, and ſhaded by lofty trees, but the air was heated

to an extreme degree. They took ſome orgeat and water, which refreſhed them, and the Marquis and Mr. Beaumont retired.

The reader will eaſily judge of Mr. Beaumont's ſenſations.

" Lord Sandford and Lady Mary Berkley," ſaid he, faintly, " the near relations of my beloved Gertrude! I am all amazement; what could be their motive? Such a deep-laid, well-executed plan for the deſtruction of two people who never had done them any injury! I am really at a loſs to account for it.—We muſt bring this Lord to condign puniſhment."

" Aſſuredly," replied his Lordſhip; " he ſhall, he ſhall enjoy the pleaſures of a priſon; bread and water ſhall be his diet; he ſhall not have the luxuries of bad coffee, and dirty ſoup meagre.—My moſt noble Lord Sandford, moſt delectable Lady Mary!—But why ſo grave?" continued the Marquis,

Marquis, clapping Mr. Beaumont on the ſhoulder.

"I really," cried Mr. Beaumont, "never felt myſelf ſo ſhocked in my life."

"What, is it at the wickedneſs of theſe wretches?"

"Exactly ſo," ſaid Mr. Beaumont.

"Come, come, my dear fellow, we muſt turn our thoughts on the moſt effectual method of ſhocking them to-morrow, with the aſſiſtance of your Lady, Mrs. Beaumont. You know ſhe is to honour Ankerwick Caſtle to-morrow with her preſence."

"True," returned Mr. Beaumont, gravely; "I have been conſidering how very near I was becoming the moſt unhappy wretch breathing, but for theſe letters. Yes, and this woman of to-morrow would have told her tale ſo plauſibly, that Lady Middleton would have thought me a villain.—I ſhudder at the probable effects of theſe flagitious acts!"

"They are now over, however," ſaid the Marquis.

"True," returned Mr. Beaumont; "but the impreſſion they have made upon me ſinks deep into my heart.—What cruelties and outrages have been committed againſt me!—I feel ſhocked beyond meaſure!"

"I look upon it," ſaid the Marquis, "this Manning, who was ſo very careful of you, is no other than the Reverend Mr. Winkfield."

"Doubtleſs the very man," anſwered Mr. Beaumont; "we ought to have him inſtantly ſecured.—He is huſband to Lady G——'s woman, who muſt have been concerned in the plot.—What miſchiefs may not have been practiſed on my dear relation!—And now it ſtrikes me ſtrongly that the worthy woman to whom I am indebted for all, is no other than a young perſon of excellent underſtanding, and very poliſhed manners, who lived with Lady G——, by whom I was moſt carefully attended in my illneſs, who was privy to my ravings, and whom I have often obſerved in tears.—Alas! why did I not know of this

this ſooner? I will inſtantly write to my dear Lady G——, to find out this young woman if poſſible, that I may reward both her and her brother as they deſerve."

"You muſt then," ſaid the Marquis, "ſend your letters to the Engliſh Ambaſſador; for, take my word for it, Beaumont, your letters, directed to Lady G——, will never reach her: he is your intimate friend, and by that means all will be ſettled."

Mr. Beaumont approved very much of this advice, and went to write accordingly.

Both Lady Middleton and Mrs. Markham were delighted to find that Lord Loveſdale was ſo much better. He ſeemed quite a new man; his ſpirits and health were vaſtly improved; he was lively, and apparently happy, animated, and cheerful; his amiable qualities rendered him dear to all. The joy that reigned at the caſtle, on the ſafe arrival of its future Lord, was very

great; all the bells in the neighbouring villages were to be rung on Saturday. Illuminations alſo were ordered for that day; but they wiſhed to keep it ſecret until they viſited the Abbey, where they learned Lord Sandford and his ſiſter were, with all the reſt of the family.

About twelve o'clock the following day, arrived the lady, who came to make known her claim on Mr. Beaumont. When they ſaw her carriage—"Come," ſaid the Marquis to Mr. Beaumont, "ſhall we both go and hand this amiable creature out?"

They went, and found her extremely beautiful. She had every appearance of a foreigner, and ſpoke in French her wiſh of ſeeing Lady Middleton. She had not the honour of knowing her Ladyſhip, but ſhe had ſomething to communicate that nearly concerned her—it was for her Ladyſhip's private ear.

Mr.

Mr. Beaumont had previouſly changed his name for that day to Williams. He led this fair one into the preſence of Lady Middleton. She ſeemed in very great confuſion; but quickly recovering herſelf, ſhe addreſſed Lady Middleton in Italian, who kept up a converſation with her in that language, in which both Lord Loveſdale, and Mr. Williams joined—the latter particularly, who ſtood before her frequently, and engaged her attention, while the riſibility of the company could ſcarcely be reſtrained. At length they retired one by one. Lady Middleton condeſcended to deceive the lady by detaining Mr. Beaumont, and informing her that he was her very near relative and friend, and, therefore, what ſhe wiſhed to ſay might, with every propriety, be communicated before him. She at firſt heſitated, and made ſome objections, but her Ladyſhip was poſitive.

"Nothing," ſaid ſhe, "that can be fit for me to hear, can reaſonably be

expected by any ſtranger to be a ſecret from ſo near a relation and friend."

The lady, therefore, at laſt conſented to admit Mr. Williams to the conference, and began by aſking Lady Middleton if ſhe were not on the point of being married to Mr. Beaumont. Her Ladyſhip anſwered very gravely that ſhe was, and begged to know why ſhe aſked the queſtion.

"Would to Heaven," ſaid ſhe, in a mournful voice, "I was not ſo much concerned in whatever relates to that gentleman!"

She took out her handkerchief, put it to her eyes, and ſeemed in the greateſt diſtreſs.

"What can poſſibly affect you ſo much?" aſked Lady Middleton; "if it is in my power to be of any ſervice to you, I certainly will."

"Alas,

"Alas, Madam!" replied the lady, "what I am going to relate nearly concerns yourſelf."

"Pray," ſaid Lady Middleton, "do not keep me longer in ſuſpenſe; I am very impatient to hear what you have to ſay."

"My ſtory ſhall be ſhort, Madam," ſaid the lady; "I will tell it to your Ladyſhip in as few words as poſſible.

## CHAP. II.

"MY father is a man of illuſtrious birth, a native of Naples. I am his only daughter; but I had two brothers, univerſally confeſſed to be moſt accompliſhed and elegant men;—were they near me, I ſhould have no

no cauſe to make this application to you.—Do not think I mention it from vanity, but I was much admired.—Juſt about the time Mr. Beaumont arrived at Naples, a Neapolitan Nobleman became attached to me; I rather liked him, but, unfortunately for me, Mr. Beaumont had letters of introduction to my father, who, of courſe, introduced him to his family. He became the friend of both my brothers, and an intimate with us. The grace, and uncommon attractions of this too inſinuating man I need not point out to you; his power of deception is great, but his attractions ſtill greater.—I became fondly attached to him, and he appeared equally ſo to me.—My father was extremely auſtere, and much bigotted to his religion; he very early warned me againſt forming any connexion with a Proteſtant, as, if I did, he would exclude me from his heart for ever.—What did I not ſuffer when I found myſelf in the very predicament I had been ſo carefully taught to ſhun!—Beaumont was, alas! much too dear

to

to me; he preſſed me to elope with him when I told him of my father's prohibitions, but that ſtep I poſitively refuſed.—He begged me to conſent to a private marriage;—there was nothing left unſaid to remove my ſcruples; he ſwore eternal love, that he was wretched at the attention of the Neapolitan, who preſſed my father extremely to conſent to our marriage.—Judge, Madam, of my ſituation—urged to marry a man whom, ſince I knew Beaumont, I could not endure, and give up for ever him whom I too fondly doted on!—My father's poſitive commands to prepare to meet this Nobleman as my future huſband, baniſhed all further conſideration; I informed my lover, and agreed to his propoſal of a private marriage.—My father ſeemed in ſo great a hurry to have this favourite point concluded, that inſtant preparations were made. No time was to be loſt to ſave me from what I conſidered the greateſt of all evils; and when the day of my elopement from my father's houſe

was announced to me as the very laſt it was ſafe for me to ſtay, I felt myſelf exactly in that kind of diſpoſition which the great maſter of the human paſſions would deſcribe in Andromache, when he tells us ſhe cried and ſmiled at the ſame inſtant. The oppoſite affections of joy and grief were ſtruggling with ſuch power for the ſuperiority, that the latter, I believe, would have conquered, had not an unkind ſcene with my father urged me headlong into deſtruction; and I became the following day the wife of a man, whoſe conduct to me for two years has been ſuch as I thought impoſſible for me to experience, and live.

" The horrors of my unfortunate ſituation threw me into a lingering nervous diſeaſe; and when I was left alone in a houſe he had hired, on our arrival in London, and that I ſaw him no more, the moſt dreadful paroxyſms of grief were ſucceeded by a kind of ſtupid vacuity of thought, more dreadful than even deſpair itſelf.—Reſt, which renews our ſtrength, and refreſhes our wearied limbs,

limbs, was denied me; I would ſpend whole days ſhut up in my apartment, weeping and bewailing loſt happineſs.

" During theſe hours of lonely miſery, I would look back on my home, on my dear family, from whom I had, by my undutiful conduct, ſhut myſelf out for ever.—My kind, my tender, my affectionate brothers, when I thought of their love, their care, the days of joy I had paſſed in their dear ſociety, Reaſon ſeemed to tremble on her ſeat, a freezing chillneſs ſtruck upon my heart, ſuch as ſeemed to threaten annihilation.—In my deſpair, and almoſt ſtate of inſanity, I would call upon the daughters of Erebus and Nox; I would enquire of Clotho why ſhe brought me into life; of Lacheſis why ſhe determined for me ſo ſevere a lot; and of Atropos, why, with her ſharp ſciſſars, ſhe did not quickly cut the thread of my moſt wretched exiſtence.

" Such," ſaid this elegant woman, " were my ravings—ſuch were the horrors, the unkind treatment of a huſband, moſt dear to my

my heart, threw me into; and yet, when my violent agitations abated, I found myſelf ſo nearly concerned in whatever regarded him, that I could take pleaſure in nothing of which he was not a ſharer. I grew ingenious at finding out excuſes for his abſence, for his unkindneſs.—We are unwilling to believe what will prejudice, in our opinion, an object who is inexpreſſibly dear to us.—Then again, unſtable and unhappy, I was often offended at my own wiſhes; I would, for a moment, think him unworthy my too tender love, and vow to drive him from my heart for ever.

" In this wretched and unſettled ſtate of mind, a favourite dependant on my family, who attached herſelf to me, joined my fortunes, and fled with me from her native country, whom I conſidered, though in an humble line of life, the only real friend I dared call my own: ſhe had good ſenſe, much beauty, and, from quick parts, had attained from my maſters almoſt as much information as myſelf.—This amiable and accompliſhed

accompliſhed girl, whom Mr. Beaumont called Emily, from diſliking her own name, and whom, to indulge him, I alſo called by the ſame, aſked my liberty to take a walk, (which was an indulgence I did not think proper to allow myſelf). I readily complied, anxious that ſhe ſhould enjoy a little air and exerciſe.—I told her I was very much pleaſed at her having ſuch a deſire, and hoped ſhe would find it ſo agreeable, that ſhe would be often tempted to repeat it. I obſerved ſhe changed colour; ſhe took my hand, and preſſing it to her heart, thanked me for my goodneſs, and broke abruptly from me. I was ſtruck at her manner; but concluded it proceeded from attachment to me, and that her ſenſibility was raiſed by my kindneſs.—I waited with impatience for her return, but I ſaw her no more.

" I ſhould tire were I to deſcribe minutely the diſtreſs which the loſs of this poor girl gave me; it redoubled all my griefs. I blamed myſelf for ſuffering her to walk alone

alone in such a town as London. I painted to myself ten thousand misfortunes having happened to her, and considered myself the primary cause.—'Why did I not leave her in her own country?' I would cry.—'Why has my imprudence caused the fall of another unfortunate being?'

"Near eight months rolled over my forlorn head, each day finding me still more unhappy than the foregoing.—I received a note from my husband, saying he would be in South-Audley-Street the next day. When I thought I was actually to be in the same house with him again, I found myself bewildered in a wide field of care; I looked upon the time as too short to regulate my rule of conduct; confused ideas arose in my mind; I was prepossessed with an opinion that he had formed another attachment, and thought, in justice to myself, I ought to demand the cause of being despised, thrown off, and neglected. I retraced my every action since our marriage; I examined minutely the whole of my conduct, and impartially

impartially found myself blameless, except that, perhaps, I loved him to excess. But, surely, I thought that crime ought rather to have endeared me to him.

" Hope founded on desert is just.—' I will mildly reason with him,' said I; ' I will expostulate with him on his cruelty, on the misery he has caused me; the splendour, the peace, the happiness my connexion with him has deprived me of; I will bring back to his remembrance all those enjoyments he has robbed me of.'—

" I at last worked myself up to such a degree of enthusiasm, that I verily persuaded myself that this visit would have produced the happiest effects; that I should have been reinstated in his affections; that he would have given up the connexion that had deprived me of his heart; and that, by my pure affection, and propriety of conduct, I should have saved him from a life of dissipation and vice.—Oh my soul! with what delusive dreams was I bewildering thee!—I eagerly grasped at shadows,

ſhadows, when ſubſtance was not to be found; for in the midſt of theſe reaſonings I received a letter, which acquainted me with a new unforeſeen misfortune. A ſudden trembling, as I read, enervated all my joints; the vital heat ſeemed to be departing, and a deadly coldneſs ſpread itſelf over my whole frame.—How long I remained in this way I know not; but a ſecond reading of this fatal letter reduced me again to a ſimilar ſtate. It contained an account of an intended marriage between Mr. Beaumont and a lady of great merit; and that Emily, for whom I had moſt grievouſly mourned, was the favourite miſtreſs of my huſband. —A certain weight of ſorrow, few I believe can bear without yielding to it in either body or mind, hung over me; I was ſeized with a fever, and narrowly eſcaped with my life. It was fortunate that a ſlight delirium ſaved me for ſeveral days from the ſad ſituation I was thrown into by this dreadful letter.— My firſt enquiry, when I came to myſelf, was if Lord—Mr. Beaumont I mean—

had

had been in South-Audley-Street.—I was anſwered in the negative."——

Here Lady Middleton and Mr. Beaumont looked at each other; their ſurpriſe ſeemed great—they could not reconcile to themſelves the ſeeming contradictions. They began to waver; they thought it was impoſſible the lady before them could be the perſon Lord Sandford addreſſed his letter to, under the name of Emily; for ſhe ſeemed to be really the woman of virtue and honour ſhe repreſented. There were too evident proofs of veracity in the tale ſhe told with ſuch ſenſibility, ſuch poignant feeling, to be a ſtory of the imagination; every ſentiment ſhewed her correctneſs of thought, every word was expreſſed ſo pathetically, as convinced them the heart was but too much intereſted in the whole. She had inadvertently ſaid my Lord inſtead of Mr. Beaumont, and evidently ſeemed confuſed by the miſtake. Lady Middleton took in the whole at one view; ſhe ſaw the dependant

dependant of the ſtranger was the Emily that Lord Sandford addreſſed his letter to, and ſhe was to have perſonated the wife of Mr. Beaumont. This threw ſo great a myſtery on the ſtranger, that to relieve all parties by quickly coming to an eclairciſſement, ſhe drew the letter in queſtion from her letter-caſe, as the only means of being ſatisfied; for ſhe feared the lady was the dupe of Lord Sandford, and that ſhe had made choice of that method to make a friend of her.

On preſenting the letter, Lady Middleton begged pardon for the liberty, but requeſted an elucidation of its contents. On looking at the ſuperſcription, the Italian preſented the copy of it, which ſhe had about her, holding that which had been given her unopened in her hand.

"The very ſame," ſaid Lady Middleton.

"Behold in me, Madam," continued the ſtranger, "a preſumptuous woman, who

who has thus dared to intrude herſelf into your preſence, in ſome degree under a fictitious character.—The copy I have juſt given you, came to my hands through the medium of the poſt; the kind friend, though unknown to me, who ſent it, informed me that Emily had, previous to the arrival of that letter at her houſe, eloped with a young gentleman, whom ſhe preferred to my huſband, and obſerved that, from my forlorn and unfortunate ſituation, ſhe judged it would be prudent in me to make a friend of ſo diſtinguiſhed a character as your Ladyſhip; that ſhe had ſent off to Ankerwick the original of which ſhe had ſent me the copy, and that Emily would be expected there on a certain day.—On the receipt of this friendly epiſtle, two motives moſt powerfully urged me to wait upon you, Madam: I had reaſon to believe there was ſome deep-laid ſcheme to rob you of that peace which I had long loſt myſelf, and which I ſo ſeverely felt, that common humanity pointed out to me if my

interference could prevent an ill, I ought immediately to obviate it.

" A ſe fiſh conſideration, I acknowledge, was the primary cauſe of this viſit;—the anonymous writer mentioned your Ladyſhip in ſo high a ſtrain of panegyric, and I, who was left by myſelf in a ſtrange country, bereft of every friend, every conſolation, cheriſhed the fond idea of laying open the whole of my unfortunate ſituation, and throwing myſelf on your pity for that countenance which I firmly believe you never refuſed to the virtuous in diſtreſs.—But a thouſand delicacies, known only to a feeling mind, nouriſhed in the lap of paternal fondneſs, educated in the height of ſplendour and happineſs, proud by long indulgence, and almoſt fearful of my own ſhadow, produced in my mind a maze of intricacies. The more I puzzled, the further I was from approving any of the different modes I propoſed to adopt, for introducing myſelf to your Ladyſhip; and I fear," ſaid this amiable woman, looking with a modeſt, inquiſitive

inquiſitive eye on both Lady Middleton and Mr. Beaumont, " I have thrown myſelf into the predicament of many others, who, from long conſideration, ſtumble at length on the moſt unfortunate mode; for by taking upon me the fictitious character of the woman you expected here this day, I may have robbed myſelf of the intereſt your Ladyſhip would otherwiſe have taken in my ſorrows:—but my inducements were to tell you my own ſad ſtory; and according to the manner your Ladyſhip received it, I ſhould augur the reception my diſcovery was likely to have, and its effect in my favour. Fearful to an extreme degree of my father and brothers coming to a knowledge of me, leſt the conſequences might prove fatal to any of them by the hand of Lord Sandford, as that would be a misfortune I could not bear, I have kept myſelf totally ſhut up, as Lord Sandford abſolutely refuſed to acknowledge me as his wife during his father's life.

" I determined, let my ſufferings be

what they might, never to make myself known to any of my own country.—My family is of too great consequence to be unknown to many English Noblemen;—for my identity I refer you to the Neapolitan Ambassador, or to Lord Sandford himself, who, notwithstanding his treatment of me, I think possesses a heart better than might be expected from so dissipated a character. Some excellent qualities he unquestionably possesses; and I lament that a man, who might shine conspicuous in virtue, is lost by a too great love of fashionable principles;—his prevailing vice of gallantry, which forms so strong a trait in his character, darkens and defaces many virtues; but the greater number of women who fall by his delusive arts, adds, in his opinion, so much the more to his *eclat* as a man of the very first fashion."

"Your generosity is truly noble," said Lady Middleton.

"A very bad heart it must be," replied the Italian, "which will not allow merit where

where it is, even in the greateſt enemy; and when I hear characters traduced by thoſe who will not allow one good quality, I always ſuppoſe the want of real worth to be in the ſpeaker, not in thoſe who are ſpoken of.—Lord Sandford has treated me very ill; but I ſhould deſerve it, could I be capable of not acknowledging the merit he poſſeſſes.—I have often wiſhed the ſtrong attachment I early formed for this young Lord, fell on a man of more worth; and when I found myſelf betrayed in the tendereſt point by a being of whom I conceived no ill—that ſhe, who I fooliſhly imagined had the pureſt heart and moſt virtuous principles, was intriguing with my huſband, and deſtroying my peace—when I found he practiſed thoſe arts on the only companion his cruelty had left me, I would cry—'Fool that I am, not to tear him inſtantly from my heart!'

"Yet, in ſpite of all his ill treatment, I had not power to hate him but when I was moſt impatient at the baſeneſs of his conduct, and loud in my complaints; yet,

as ſoon as they ſubſided a little, I appeared to love him almoſt more than ever.—Such is my weakneſs; and, perhaps, by declaring it I do not recommend myſelf here: I can only ſay, in my defence, that before I married him, I thought his ſoul pure and ſpotleſs as I could wiſh; and when I became his wife, I loved him with all the tenderneſs that belongs to that character."——

"Pardon me," ſaid Lady Middleton, "I find nothing in your appearance, ſentiments, and ſufferings that does not claim all the intereſt and commiſeration you can deſire; and you have only to point out how I can aſſiſt you, to aſſure yourſelf of all you hoped for from the honour your viſit has done me. Do not think I mean any thing indelicate; but I particularly wiſh to be informed of the circumſtances of your marriage, and how Lord Sandford was enabled to prevent any ſearch by your family?"

"That is a very material point," ſaid the lady, "which I ought to have had the propriety of ſatisfying you in before.—The night

night I left my father's, Lord Sandford conveyed me to a very pleaſant reſidence, where I found every thing prepared for the performance of the marriage ceremony, according to the ſeveral rites of our different churches; the witneſſes were his friends, and my companion Emily."

Lady Middleton ſaid nothing; ſhe would not wound the feelings of the ſtranger by diſcovering her fears, which were no leſs than that Winkfield and Fitzpatrick were the profeſſional performers of this awful contract. Mr. Beaumont walked about the room, and Lady Middleton judged his fears were the ſame as her own. The lady went on, not noticing either the ſilence or countenances of her auditors.

"Lord Sandford lived almoſt totally at my father's, and only occaſionally, and that very ſecretly, viſited me; by this conduct they were deceived, and when we found they had given up all hopes of finding me,

we left Naples; and the very retired manner in which I lived, prevented any traces of me, ſo that they have long ſince conſidered me as loſt to them for ever."

The ſtranger ceaſed ſpeaking, and Mr. Beaumont ſhortly after left the room. He joined the reſt of the family, who were waiting with impatience to hear of the ridiculous ſituation of Emily, and the winding up of her fictitious tale; but he ſuccinctly related an abridgement of the foregoing hiſtory to the utter amazement of all.

Mademoiſelle M——'s feelings were ſuch as did her honour; and her lively joy at having eſcaped ſuch a misfortune as ſo narrowly threatened her, ſhewed all the purity of her young and excellent heart.

"Ah!" ſaid this ſweet girl, "I now perfectly recollect;—my amiable friend, by whoſe worth I was preſerved, mentioned that there was another great and good character to be preſerved alſo; doubtleſs this

is

is the lady.—Oh!" ſaid ſhe, "every day ſhews me my folly, my great impropriety; never ſhall I forgive myſelf for the groſſneſs of my conduct in quitting my dear father's protection!—Teach me, my good Sir," addreſſing Mr. Selwin, to be ever grateful for my eſcape, and for all the kind friends I have found; and Oh that I could be certain of the forgiveneſs of my dear parents!"

"Sweet is the look of ſorrow in a heart determined to offend no more," ſaid Mr. Beaumont, taking the hand of Mademoiſelle M——; "the Marquis and his Lady cannot be deaf to ſo eloquent, ſo intereſting, and innocent a pleader."—

"I have a ſtrong preſentiment," ſaid the Italian to Lady Middleton, "that the gentleman who juſt left the room is Mr. Beaumont,—it can be no other."

"You have made a happy conjecture," anſwered Lady Middleton, and immediately informed her of all the reader already knows; of Lord Sandford's perſecution of Mr. Beaumont, and the aid he received

from his ſiſter, Lady Mary Berkley, ſoftening as much as poſſible her opinion of Lord Sandford, and leaning with much ſeverity on Lady Mary. It was, ſhe ſaid, the intention of Lord Loveſdale and Mr. Beaumont to go that day to the Abbey, where all the Berkley family, with Lord Sandford, were; and if it met her approbation, her idea was that ſhe could not have a better opportunity of making herſelf known to her Lord's family, than by accompanying the gentlemen, and claiming that protection ſo juſtly her due; and that if it was more agreeable, ſhe would herſelf attend her.

"You will want a female friend to aſſiſt and ſupport you, Madam; and I will moſt gladly take that on myſelf."

"Oh!" ſaid this moſt intereſting woman, "how infinite is my gratitude to Lady Middleton! My heart cannot unload itſelf of the weight of obligation that overpowers it, but I could not do as you kindly wiſh; my mind ſickens at the apprehenſion of adding,

adding, at ſuch a moment, to the miſery of my Lord.—Could I, in the midſt of ſuch poignant feelings, ſuch ſufferings as his improper conduct has brought upon himſelf, add to them by my abrupt and indelicate appearance before his family?—And is there an abſolute neceſſity for the gentlemen meeting?" aſked ſhe, with a tremulous voice.

As the northern blaſts agitate the poplar leaves, a like or more violent ſhaking ſeemed to ſeize her; her cheek grew pale, and her languid hands lay motionleſs on her knees; ſhe ſeemed to gaſp for reſpiration.

"Quiet your fears, dear Madam," ſaid Lady Middleton, in the moſt ſoothing voice; "nothing that you apprehend will take place. There is nothing raſh in the temper of Mr. Beaumont; he does not mean to take thoſe methods your fears point out.—I had my alarms alſo, but they have been ſilenced by the aſſurances I have

received, as the nature of the injury calls for a different conduct."——

Here Mrs. Markham entered, and ſaid the gentlemen were anxious to ſet off for the Abbey, and begged to know if Lady Middleton would honour them with any particular commands.

Her Ladyſhip looked at the ſtranger, who underſtood the appeal.

"I will write a few lines to my Lord," ſaid ſhe, "and ſend them open by Mr. Beaumont, who will be kind enough to ſay I have been here."

She was requeſted to remain at Ankerwick Caſtle until every arrangement was ſettled that could be made.

"I ſhould feel extremely ſorry," ſaid Lady Middleton, "that a time of ſuch uneaſy expectancy ſhould be paſſed by you, Madam, alone;

alone; and I hope, ere we part, you will be reſtored to a ſtate of comparative happineſs."

"I know not how to thank you for your goodneſs," replied the Italian; "Lady Middleton I find a character greater than even my warm imagination had pictured her. Proud of your protection, Madam, I gladly accept of your hoſpitality; thoſe hopes you have raiſed, have diffuſed a joy over my heart it has long been a ſtranger to."

"I moſt ſincerely wiſh," ſaid Mrs. Markham, "every hope will be realized."

The note was written, and preſented to Lady Middleton, who withdrew.

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

THE Marquis and Mr. Beaumont ſhortly after ſet off for the Abbey. Dinner had been ordered at the inn where, if the reader recollects, Lord Sandford overtook Lady Middleton and Mrs. Markham, and where all his ſerious thoughts of his couſin were baniſhed. Mr. Beaumont was put in mind of the circumſtances that had happened at the inn, in the very room where they were at dinner, and related them to the Marquis.

"This Lord Sandford," ſaid Lord Loveſdale, "if he has nothing elſe to boaſt of, muſt be allowed by every one to have a moſt exquiſite taſte in beauty;—I never before

before knew he presumed to look up to his divine cousin."

They arrived at the Abbey about seven o'clock. The road through the park to the house winded round to the east front, and the summer apartments to the north were at so great a distance from the entrance hall and saloon, that the drawing-room door was thrown open, and the Marquis and Mr. Beaumont had entered before any one of the company knew of their arrival. Very different were the sensations of this party on seeing Mr. Beaumont. We have already described the unhappiness of the Duke and Duchess of Devon at his absence. What extreme joy then did his sudden appearance cause them! They folded him to their bosoms, pressed him to their hearts—they almost wept over him.

"Have you seen our dear child?" said they both in a breath.—"Are you come from Ankerwick Castle? Does she know of your safety?"

"She

"She is very well," said Mr. Beaumont; "the moment I arrived in England, I hastened to throw myself at her feet."

"Dear Gertrude!" they both exclaimed. "You know not, Sir, what we have all suffered!"

Lords Seal and Sandford, with Ladies Mary and Ann, all congratulated him with much fervour, particularly Lady Mary; Lord Sandford was warm, but evidently confused.

Mr. Beaumont returned their congratulations with such apparent ease, such an unconcerned air, that Lady Mary became satisfied that they were not found out. She was gay and agreeable, her brother diffident and embarrassed; a look, to re-assure him, from Lady Mary now and then comforted him, but did not set him at rest.—"Beaumont," said he to himself, "at the Abbey! Oh God! what a hell is my mind!—Why, Oh why, have I dared to do such deeds?—Mary, Mary, why did you

you urge your wretched brother?—But I only am to blame!—I—what right had I to be led into ſuch wicked practices?"

Thus, in the bitterneſs of remorſe, his mind torn by the moſt afflicting diſtreſs, did he reaſon with and condemn himſelf; while his ſiſter chatted with the utmoſt unconcern with the Marquis during a private converſation between the Ducheſs and Mr. Beaumont concerning her dear child. On their joining the company, Lady Mary, with the greateſt effrontery, begged to know the ſtory of his misfortunes.

"In what part of the world, dear Sir," ſaid ſhe, "have you been under a ſpell? for certainly enchantment muſt have had ſome part in detaining you ſo many months.—What could poſſibly have prevented your writing to your friends?—We all thought poor Lady Middleton would have died;—the Duke and Ducheſs are twenty years older from care; my father got one of his bilious complaints;

Ann

Ann is half dead; and, in truth, I cannot tell what I have ſuffered myſelf:—all this family, I verily believe, would have taken up their reſidence in the family mauſoleum, but that you aroſe from the dead, and reſtored us all to life."

Mr. Beaumont bowed his thanks for her Ladyſhip's ſufferings in particular, and ſaid, with an ironical tone, ſhe looked too charming to have felt much.

" I have been informed," continued he, looking at the Duke and Ducheſs, " how much all my kind friends have thought of me in my long abſence."

This was ſaid ſo naturally, that hope began to gather ſtrength in the breaſt of Lord Sandford; he was aſtoniſhed at his ſiſter.—" Not for worlds," thought he, " could I talk ſo to the man I have ſo highly injured!"

" You

"You don't know, Mr. Beaumont," ſaid the Duke, "how very anxious we are to know the motives of your very extraordinary abſence and ſilence. Your looks tell me you have been ill;—pray Heaven, you have not contracted ſome ſad malady that may not, by good advice and care, be removed!"

Mr. Beaumont ſatisfied his Grace in that particular, and ſaid he would inform him with pleaſure of every circumſtance that had happened to him ſince the day he was to meet him on their way to London; all which has been before detailed.

Through the hiſtory Mr. Beaumont did not make it appear that he knew the authors of all his ſufferings until he came to his enlargement, when he took from his pocket all the letters of Lord Sandford and Lady Mary; and giving them to the Marquis—"Will you, my dear Lord," ſaid he, "read thoſe letters while I recover ſtrength? for

for I feel myſelf a little exhauſted from talking ſo long."

While the Marquis read, Lord Sandford evinced the ſufferings of his ſoul by the variation of his countenance, and the deep groans which he could not repreſs. Conſternation ſat on every face. Lord Seal aſked his ſon if he did not acknowledge thoſe letters to be his?

"Oh yes! yes!" ſaid he, and covered his face with his hands.

"Mary," ſaid Lord Seal again, "is this your letter alſo?"

"To be ſure it is," ſaid ſhe; "is it not an excellent joke?—Believe me, my dear, good people, Lady Middleton never would have known half her love for Mr. Beaumont but for our kind interference. And you, Sir," ſaid ſhe, "would never have doted half as much as you do ſince you have heard of the ſufferings of my beautiful couſin at your abſence.—Tell me honeſtly,"

honeſtly," ſaid ſhe, appealing to Mr. Beaumont, " is it not the caſe?"

Here Lord Loveſdale aroſe from his ſeat.

" This is too much," ſaid he; " acknowledge, Madam, your diabolical motives for theſe horrid ſchemes againſt the lovely, amiable Lady Middleton and my friend, nor dare to turn into ridicule ſuch complete wickedneſs.--Perhaps," ſaid he, looking ſeverely at her undaunted Ladyſhip, " if my poor friend Baggot was here——"

At the name of Baggot ſhe dropped from her chair in a violent fit, and was ſo ſtrongly convulſed, that it was neceſſary to have her bled. She was removed to her room, and continued in ſo alarming a ſtate, that a phyſician was ſent for, who, living near the Abbey, came immediately. He gave her ſome draughts, which compoſed her a little, and

and expreſſed hopes of her being better by the following morning.

Mr. Beaumont, when quiet was a little reſtored, continued his relation. He went through the ſtory of Mademoiſelle M——, and in concluſion preſented the open note from the Italian lady. Lord Sandford ſtaggered to a chair, but ſaid not a word.

" Oh God!" ſaid Lord Seal, " in thy mercy eaſe me of the torture I ſuffer!—Such deep-laid villany, ſuch complicated wickedneſs!—The lives of two diſtinguiſhed and amiable characters in danger of being made for ever miſerable! Mr. Beaumont impriſoned, ſtarved, thrown on the bed of ſickneſs, left without care, without nouriſhment, relieved by accident from a confinement that promiſed to end in death!—Mercy! —I deſpiſe thee, thou wretch!" looking at Lord Sandford.—" Thy father's eternal diſpleaſure awaits thee!—Thy crimes call loudly on thy country for puniſhment!"—

Here

Here the Duke warmly interfered.

" Let us, my dear Lord," ſaid he, " hear what Charles has to ſay for himſelf. I have narrowly obſerved him; I have ſeen him ſuffer too much, to believe he is hardened in vice; he may have ſomething to offer that may palliate thoſe actions that ſeem to us ſo flagrant."

Here the Duke appealed to his grandſon with that look of mild yet agitated enquiry as would ſay—" I have hopes that I truſt you will not diſappoint."—Lord Sandford aroſe from his ſeat; his countenance bore every mark of inward ſuffering; his air and manner were ſolemn; deep affliction ſeemed to have taken poſſeſſion of his ſoul; his attitude was that of timid entreaty.

" I am ſorry, Sir," ſaid he, addreſſing the Duke in a low voice, " that I have nothing to offer in my own juſtification; I plead

I never ſaw her for a fortnight, and hardly left the door of her apartment ;—ſhe then became comparatively better, and again I ſaw her with all the reſt of the party who ſtill remained at the Priory. As we entered, I lingered behind, and when each congratulated her on her recovery, I advanced ;—ſhe held out her hand to me, and, with a clear and collected, though feeble voice, thanked me particularly for the kind intereſt I took in her ſafety.

' But I fear,' ſaid ſhe, ' you have thought ſo much of me, that you have neglected yourſelf. My beloved Emily promiſed to take care of you.'

" Affected by this ſpeech, delivered in the tendereſt accents, and by her appearance, which ſeemed more than human, the fatigue of my mind and body, all concurred to bring me to ſuch a pitch of weakneſs that I burſt into tears. I left the room as well as I could, but not before thoſe tears had the moſt fatal effects. Miſs Walſingham, overcome, like myſelf, with feelings too

too exquiſite to be borne, had fainted, and was no longer able to bear any perſon in the room. Phyſicians were inſtantly ſent for, and with hope, fear, uncertainty, and terror, I awaited their arrival traverſing my room. Two very able medical men lived near, and in a few hours, the longeſt I ever ſpent, I was informed they had been with Miſs Walſingham, and that they were going away. With ſenſations I know not how to deſcribe, I hurried to the parlour where they were;—they told me with much feeling, though at the ſame time with candour, ſhe could not live long, for ſhe had been a conſiderable time in a deep decline, and nothing could ſave her.—At theſe cruel words I ſunk into a chair;—ſo young, ſo good, ſo ſenſible, to be thus cut off! I would have given, with pleaſure, my own life to have ſaved her's.

'And is there then no hope?' I aſked, tears rolling down my face; 'cannot you adminiſter one ſweet word of comfort?—Muſt this angel be indeed torn from her friends thus in the prime of life?'

but happineſs; but the generous Beaumont will plead for me, and where he forgives, the workings of a father's heart will do much."

"Charles," ſaid Lord Seal, "I have never thought ill of you before; if any thing can do away your paſt conduct in the minds of thoſe you are dear to, it is your preſent manifeſt affliction. You could not affect thoſe ſtrong feelings—they muſt come from the heart; you cannot ſurely mean to deceive us."

"There are many things," ſaid Lord Sandford, "I have done, that ſhame and a ſenſe of guilt oblige me to draw a veil over; but truſt me, my father, I aim not at deception; the misfortunes I have brought upon myſelf, have opened my eyes, and leave me at liberty to reflect on my crimes in all their circumſtances of guilt.—I confeſs I dared to commit deeds I ſhudder at with horror; and, ſelf-condemned, I cannot plead.—I muſt, with ſhame, confeſs my conduct has been what it is repreſented, and that being

being the caſe, I cannot excuſe myſelf; I ſhall only ſay that by that duty and reſpect I have always paid you, Sir," looking at his father, " and that veneration and love I have always felt for the Duke and Ducheſs, you muſt judge of the future life of a man awaked as from a dream, wondering at a long courſe of vicious practices, and ſearching in vain into the original motives, without being able to account for them."

On ſaying this he quitted the room ſo extremely affected, that he left an impreſſion on the minds of both the Marquis and Mr. Beaumont very much to his advantage.

" Gentlemen," ſaid Lord Seal, " my ſon, in ſpeaking of his duty and reſpect to me, has ſaid nothing but the truth—I may add alſo, the moſt engaging and affectionate attentions;—on a tedious ſick bed he has watched over me with the kindeſt care, and when my diſeaſe has left me, he never



LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

conſidered his taſk at an end, but by every little art and contrivance, relieved my weakneſs, and amuſed my mind; nor until I was perfectly reſtored, did he ever think proper to abſent himſelf from my ſick room.—Thus bound to him by the fondeſt regards, knowing that pecuniary intereſted motives had nothing to do in it, he being totally out of my power in that point, you muſt judge the ſhock I have this day received;—I thought Charles a gay, unthinking boy, but I thought him the worthieſt fellow that lived."

The tear ſtood in poor Lord Seal's eye at the reflection that ſo many women of the higheſt diſtinction had fallen by his ſon's arts!

"Mademoiſelle M——," ſaid Mr. Beaumont, "through his means, has only eſcaped a Convent—ſhe has ſuffered nothing.—The Italian lady loves him to exceſs;—if Lord Sandford confirms any marriage that may have taken place, and that ſhe is kept in ignorance that it was a fictitious one, ſhe

appears

appears to me to be a woman who will do honour to any family; ſhe ſeems well educated, and even learned; her family is illuſtrious, and her appearance and manners the moſt prepoſſeſſing: if Lord Sandford ſtill loves her, there may be the happieſt accommodation."

"I doubt not," ſaid the Duke, "but Charles will make atonement, if poſſible, to this amiable woman, and ſhould ſhe be really what ſhe appears, the connection augurs well; ſhould he be inclined to do her juſtice, my Lord Seal I know will be no impediment."

"Do not ſuſpect me of any thing ſo baſe," returned his Lordſhip; "would I could reinſtate every unfortunate woman he has been a ſource of miſery to!"

"Sandford," rejoined the Duke, "is a better man than the world takes him for;—his vices are on the ſurface; I have always expected him to make in the end a good member of ſociety.—I very early perceived that his mind was like a garden that had

naturally a fine deep ſoil, but from bad gardeners, who ſuffered it to lie waſte, it was hurt—weeds grew up in every part, and all the beautiful flowers that, under an able manager, would have flouriſhed and come to perfection, were choaked up, and lay buried amid the heap of noxious weeds that was ſuffered to overpower them.—When Charles quits his preſent companions, when he thinks ſeriouſly of his paſt follies, his mind will be ſimilar to this ſame garden; the weeds will diſappear, the produce of the natural good ſoil will ſpring up, and ſhoot with ſtrength, and the able gardener will carefully root out all that would ſmother and deface the beauties he will take a pride in ſhewing to the world."

"He is much indebted to you," ſaid Lord Seal; "your Grace has drawn a picture that, could it be realized——"

"Doubt it not, my dear Lord; I appeal to the Marquis," interrupted the Duke, "to Mr. Beaumont, whether his conduct

of

of this evening has not given them a very different idea of him."

They both with warmth aſſented.

"Yes," ſaid the Duke, exulting in his good work of reconciling his favourite of the Berkley family, "I know that Charles will not diſappoint me, and I think he muſt have had able abettors in the affair againſt Mr. Beaumont."

Here Lady Ann entered, and excuſed her brother's appearance for that night; but brought a meſſage to Mr. Beaumont, ſignifying that on the morrow he ſhould beg leave to talk to him on the contents of the letter from Ankerwick Caſtle. Lady Ann reported that her ſiſter was aſleep, and peace ſeemed to be in ſome degree reſtored at the Abbey; but Lord Seal, who begged permiſſion to retire for the night, was burthened with a load of ſorrow that promiſed no repoſe.—He was a man of great worth and

ſenſibility; he loved all his children with extravagant fondneſs; but a likeneſs in the features of Lady Mary to her mother ſeemed doubly to attach him to her, added to the moſt unremitting attention ſhe paid him, which appeared to flow from her love and duty, but in reality from avarice, and a wiſh, by that means, of making her father ſubſervient to all her pleaſures and deſires. Lady Mary's letter to her brother ſunk deep into the heart of Lord Seal; he ſaw ſhe was the principal; her directions for a double portion of ill-treatment to Mr. Beaumont, her being evidently the contriver of the plot, and the agony the name of Baggot threw her into, all were ſo many daggers in the heart of her tender father. He recollected the Honourable Mr. Baggot at Nice, and their intimacy there; he dreaded he knew not what, for ſome myſtery hung on the words of Lord Loveſdale.

With theſe unquiet, wretched feelings, Lord Seal paſſed a moſt ſleepleſs, weary night,

night, and aroſe from his pillow with a bitter portion of ſorrows. Lord Sandford appeared at the breakfaſt table; he entered the room with the Duke and Lord Seal, with whom he had had that morning a private conference;—his countenance was pale, and dejection ſat on every feature. When the table was removed, Lord Seal addreſſed Mr. Beaumont.

" My ſon, Sir," ſaid he, " has made a full confeſſion this morning to the Duke and me of his connection with the fair Italian, who is at preſent with Lady Middleton. —He takes ſo much blame to himſelf for his treatment of this lady, that he leaves nothing for his friends to accuſe him of; he repreſents her to be a woman of great ſtrength of reaſon, and eſpecially to be admired and valued for her exalted morals; and that her delicacy is ſuch, that when ſhe is informed of the illegality of her marriage, he has ſerious fears for her life.—She is of the illuſtrious Houſe of Sforza, and was

bred up in the ſplendour that became a daughter of that great Houſe.—Such a woman, my ſon, ought not to have been deceived; but ſince you are now anxious to begin a reformation, and wiſh to render juſtice to this injured and accompliſhed lady, as the firſt ſtep towards it, I recommend adopting ſuch a mode as will ſave her from ever knowing the inſults you intended her:—a further deception I think is allowable; I ſhall take upon myſelf to reconcile her to having the ceremony performed again, and give her ſuch reaſons for it as will ſet her quite at reſt.—The utmoſt care muſt be taken not to raiſe her ſuſpicions; for if ſhe is a being on whom Nature has poured out her riches with ſo liberal a hand, we muſt do all we can to ſooth her mind, gratify her delicacy, and move her affections. I hope Charles," continued Lord Seal, addreſſing the Duke, "will not juſtify the doubts I cannot help forming of his future conduct; for if he loved this woman with the fervour and unalterable

regard

regard that every man ought to feel for an amiable wife, he could not have left her a prey to grief and diſappointment in a ſtrange land; but if, on the contrary, he now feels as becomes the man dear to ſo much perfection, every good may be expected from the re union.—She loves him you think, Mr. Beaumont, with the ſtrongeſt and pureſt affection? Take her then, Charles, to your heart, and be true to her; ſhe will be a companion for life that will do you honour, and when all the follies and extravagancies of youthful fancy ſhall be no more, ſhe will be a faithful and agreeable friend in the winter of life. In the ſociety of a ſenſible and virtuous woman, your hours will glide pleaſantly on;—in affliction ſhe will conſole you, in ſickneſs attend you; and if unremitting ſucceſs ſhould be your lot, her valuable ſtore of wiſdom and ſound reaſon, ſuch as you deſcribe her to poſſeſs, will ever bring ſomething new, and her converſation will always afford freſh pleaſure and improvement.—Remember, at a very tender

age, on your faith, she left her native home and beloved friends, and became an exile; her love for you has destroyed her prospects; she withers in the early morning of her days —an outcast from her family, shut up from all society, you leave her to mourn her misconduct alone and unprotected.—Let honour, let pity rouse you; do not basely load with misfortune and unhappiness the woman who even now prefers you to all mankind."

Here the door was thrown open, and the physician was announced; he gave an account of Lady Mary's disorder, which, though it was not very alarming, was sufficient to say—"If she grows worse, I shall have prepared her friends not to be surprised."—However, it was such as brought infinite pain to her fond father, who left the room, in great agitation, with the physician.

When he retired—"Alas!" said Lord Sandford, "how my dear father suffers!"

He presented a letter to Mr. Beaumont, directed to Lady Sandford.—"The honour and generosity of your overlooking, and forgiving the injuries you have received from me, Sir, have impressed me with so high an idea of your character, that I will follow you, and instead of offering any apology, I will ask a favour.—Make my peace with Lady Middleton; reconcile Lady Sandford to me; tell her I have, in the agonies of my heart for the sufferings I have caused her, spoke of her real worth and perfections to my father, and the Duke and Duchess; that they are highly prepossessed in her favour, and long to take her to their hearts.—Excuse me," said he, "I cannot talk; when next we meet, I hope I shall be better enabled."

"Set yourself at rest, my Lord," said Mr. Beaumont; "your conduct is noble, and will meet its reward.—I will answer for the accommodations you wish."

Lord Sandford put one hand to his forehead,

head, and gave the other to Mr. Beaumont, who very cordially ſhook it, and his Lordſhip haſtily left the room.

"Ah Mr. Beaumont!" ſaid the Duke, "how happy ſhould I be could you and Charles become friends! I hope you are not ſo prejudiced againſt him as to make it impoſſible. You ſee his feelings, the workings of his heart; truſt me, his mind will continue firm in his firſt reſolves; he will, in time, become a companion congenial even to you, and your amiable friend, the Marquis.—Tell Gertrude to admit him to Ankerwick Caſtle;—he could not remain there long without amendment."

They bowed to the Duke, ſaid much in praiſe of Lord Sandford's preſent diſpoſition of mind, and the happineſs it would give Mr. Beaumont to gain his regards; and after ſome private converſation on the intended arrangement of ſettlements, &c. &c. they left the Abbey, and about five o'clock arrived at the caſtle.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IV.

LORD Sandford, after ſignifying to the family his intention of abſenting himſelf for a fortnight, got into his carriage, and drove off. When he was alone, he gave vent to his full heart.

" How happy, how reſpectable might I have been at this moment," ſaid he, " had I, like Beaumont, Loveſdale, or half a hundred more, acted with rectitude, prudence, and honour!—Never will the ſcene I yeſterday experienced leave my memory! How poor, how degraded, how vicious, how deſpicable I appeared! Long, long have I felt the pains of hell for the villanies I was

I was daily practiſing, yet knew not how to leave off habits that cuſtom made agreeable! —Coward that I am, that this," taking out a piſtol, " ſhould not with one motion of my finger put an end to the conflicts I feel!" He held it in his hand; he trembled from head to foot; he felt as if the principles of life were nearly exhauſted; he graſped the piſtol.—" Come," ſaid he, " thou inſtrument of death, come, and do thy duty, and quickly rid me of an exiſtence my own vices have made inſupportable!"

Juſt at that moment the foremoſt boy dropped his whip, and the carriage ſtopped; the out-rider turned back, the coachman rode up to the carriage window, Lord Sandford hid the piſtol, the boy's whip was taken up, and the carriage drove on. Though all this was done in a moment, it was a moment big with the fate of a man who never formed a thought of ſuicide before, but whoſe feelings were worked up to ſuch a pitch, that almoſt madneſs ſeized his brain;

brain; and in that moment of infanity he was on the point of committing an act he afterwards fhuddered to think of.

How myfterious are thy ways, Oh Providence! how inferutable thy decrees! How often do the moft unlooked-for, the moft trivial, and moft unaccountable accidents prevent the moft ferious misfortunes! The dropping of a whip caufed the ftoppage of the carriage, and inftantly all the fervants were about their Lord. This gave a momentary turn to his imagination; and when he was again left to himfelf, reflection came to his aid, the piftol dropped on the feat befide him, and he funk back in the corner of the carriage, where he lay for near an hour in a ftate of almoft perfect ftupor.

The rattling of the carriage wheels on the pavement of the little town of ——, juft half-way between the Abbey and Appleby, the feat of Lord Sandford, from whence he always took poft-horfes, roufed him; and when

when the carriage ſtopped, the ready landlord's profound and reſpectful bow, with—"My Lord, I hope your Lordſhip is very well?" raiſed him up on the ſeat, and he felt as if juſt ariſen from the dead.

This landlord had been a ſervant of the Duke of Devon, ſet up by his Grace, and patronized by him; the houſe was reſorted to by all the family and its connections, ſo that, after a few years, it is not to be wondered at that the good man and woman, at the Devon-Arms, in the little town of ——, ſhould find themſelves much more wealthy than their moſt ſanguine wiſhes had taught them to hope for. The groom had gone on the night before, as was the cuſtom, to prevent a diſappointment in horſes; and Lord Sandford, who was expected, was received by theſe good people with all that was natural to expect from them. The man put his hand on the lock of the carriage-door, the woman was curtſeying to the ground, but Lord Sandford's imagination

imagination was ſo totally abſorbed, every nerve ſo much unſtrung, all recollection ſo fled, that the courteſy of theſe good people was unheeded and unanſwered. They were all aſtoniſhment; they had always been uſed to his flying out of the carriage, with a nod of the head, and kind enquiries after their family; but when the door was opened, and they ſaw his Lordſhip as pale as death, horror on his countenance, no offer at ſpeaking, they were terrified; they took him out of the carriage, and laid him on a bed; a cold ſweat iſſued from every pore; they were moſt ſeriouſly alarmed for his life.

About half an hour before Lord Sandford's arrival, a Mr. Wentworth drove to the inn in a poſt-carriage, and wanted another to get home as faſt as poſſible; he was much chagrined to find there was not a horſe at home but thoſe engaged to his Lordſhip; he wanted thoſe from the laſt ſtage to be ſent on with him, but as his houſe

houſe was eleven miles further, the boy ſaid it was more than his horſes were equal to, and poſitively refuſed to proceed. In this dilemma Mr. Wentworth aſked for a horſe for himſelf to ride, but the good man at the Devon-Arms had no ſuch thing; he, therefore, went to try what he could do about the town, and was juſt returning from his unſucceſsful eſſay, when he met the landlord in the greateſt diſtreſs at the ſituation of Lord Sandford.

"Be ſo good, Sir," ſaid he to Mr. Wentworth, "juſt to look in upon my dear young Lord; I know you are a moſt excellent phyſician, and can inform us what ought to be done for him, and if we ſhould not ſend off to the Abbey?"

Mr. Wentworth went immediately to the bedſide of Lord Sandford; and on feeling his pulſe, he thought it neceſſary to give him a draught to revive, and at the ſame time, to cool him, for he had by this

this time got into a moſt violent heat. He went himſelf to an apothecary's, procured the draught, and had the pleaſure to find his patient, in a couple of hours, well enough to proceed to his own houſe, which was ſix miles further on the ſame road than Mr. Wentworth's.

When Lord Sandford was told of the accident that detained him at the Devon-Arms, he ſaid he ſhould be happy to ſet him down, and be much obliged by his company.

This was a moſt fortunate rencounter, and Lord Sandford's fortune again befriended him; for Mr. Wentworth was the character, of all others, that was at this moment the moſt fit companion for Lord Sandford. He chatted in the moſt agreeable manner during their ride, but could not raiſe his Lordſhip's ſpirits; a moſt violent head-ach attacked him, and the noiſe and motion of the carriage were dreadful to him.

When

When they arrived at the ſeat of Mr. Wentworth, they found it impoſſible for his Lordſhip to proceed; he, therefore, remained there that night, nor was he in the morning able to remove to Appleby.—He had a great deal of fever, and was attended with the kindeſt care by the worthy Mr. Wentworth.

This was a man who, upon fifteen hundred pounds per annum, lived in a ſtate of the greateſt happineſs, and enjoyed, in a ſmall compaſs, the bounty and gaiety of univerſal Nature. He was bleſſed with the beſt heart, lived in a ſweet retirement, the ornament of ſociety, and friend of mankind; his was the abode of peace and content; he made all around him happy, for he was happy himſelf. He was eſteemed by moſt, envied by ſome, and laughed at by a few; but he acted from the dictates of a pure heart and enlightened mind, and lived more to pleaſe himſelf than the world.

A few

A few days, paſſed in all the little acts of hoſpitable attention, brought a greater degree of intimacy between Lord Sandford and this gentleman than years in the common courſe of connection; and before they parted, which was nearly ten days, his Lordſhip made him acquainted not only with all the reader knows, but every thought, every wiſh of his heart. He put himſelf under a very able director, and reſolved to follow implicitly his advice. He received ſuch leſſons of morality, was reaſoned with on every ſubject with ſuch ſtrength, ſuch power of argument, that Lord Sandford was aſtoniſhed; he already felt himſelf a new man.

"Would to God," ſaid he, "I had ſpent more time at Emerſly than at Paris, Rome, &c. &c! I ſhould have been a better man, a more reſpected character."

"At twenty-four," ſaid Mr. Wentworth, "the characters of ſome men are as far from being formed, as others are at thirteen. I have been of your acquaintance, my

my Lord, ſome years, yet knew nothing of you but from report; that you have erred I muſt admit, but you poſſeſs too fine feelings, too much real contrition for paſt offences, not to make a moſt valuable character. Your bodily illneſs, which I could not account for, when you aſſured me you had committed no exceſs, proceeded from the agitation of your mind; that mind muſt poſſeſs a great portion of ſenſibility, muſt be alive to all the finer feelings that are the great ornaments of human nature.—Do juſtice to Lady Sandford; bring her to Appleby, ſelect a few of worth for your intimates, cultivate the friendſhip of Lady Middleton, the firſt woman in the world, and of Mr. Beaumont; reſide in the country, turn your thoughts to domeſtic happineſs; and with ſuch a companion as you deſcribe Lady Sandford to be, you may, if you pleaſe, become one of the moſt enviable men in England.

Lord Sandford ſhook his head at the picture

picture Mr. Wentworth drew; for though it was very much to his mind, he thought it too sudden a tranſition to promiſe the deſired effect.

"This image of peace," ſaid he, "you have drawn ſo charming and ſmiling, moves my heart, and raviſhes my imagination; but remorſe for crimes unnerves me, and though I feel all the inclination to realize ſuch happineſs, I want ſtrength to begin it. —To meet Lady Sandford is more than I can think of; I have not ſeen her theſe two years;—villain as I am, to have treated with ſo much cruelty ſuch a gentle ſoul!"

"The ſooner you ſee her, take my word for it," ſaid Mr. Wentworth, "the ſooner you will be reconciled to yourſelf."

"Yes," returned Lord Sandford, "if it was over; but there I am a coward."

Mr. Wentworth wiſhed to lead his thoughts to agriculture.

"Appleby is a place that wants improvement, my Lord: I could recommend some very useful plans, that would be productive of both pleasure and profit; I will, if you please, ride over it with you, and point out the alterations that I think will be of great advantage to the estate.—Suffer me to shew you my farm, and how it is regulated; and if you approve of it, I will take you as a pupil."

They rode out; Lord Sandford was in raptures, and Mr. Wentworth left nothing undone to encourage the growing passion. The next day they set off for Appleby; where, under Mr. Wentworth, Lord Sandford formed plans of such magnitude, that it was supposed ten years would hardly bring to a finished state.

Lady Mary Berkley's dangerous illness, out of which she was not expected to recover, threw all the Devon family into the greatest distress. She, however, at length

began

began to mend; and when she was quite out of danger, the Duke, Duchess, and Lord Seal set off for Ankerwick Castle to pay a visit to Lady Sandford.

The reports of this lady they found not exaggerated; they all seemed equally charmed with her. Lord Seal requested a private *tête-à-tête*, and she retired with infinite grace with his Lordship.

"How does my Gertrude like Lady Sandford on a more intimate knowledge of her?" asked the Duchess.

"We are all highly prepossessed in her favour," returned Lady Middleton; "she seems to have a thorough knowledge of the human heart, and a deal of erudition and refinement; she appears to have all the vigour of a great genius, and by wonderful industry has raised herself above the discouragements that too often impede the advancement of lesser minds; she illustrates her conversation with such perpetual variety,

that you can never feel the ſmalleſt ſymptom of *ennui* in her company. I have met few more amiable or more accompliſhed women; ſhe has ſurmounted all the difficulties of our language, and is converſant with moſt of our celebrated authors, and all ſince her arrival in England; and yet, from that period to the preſent moment, only juſt completes two years. The hours devoted to make her a complete miſtreſs of Engliſh, ſaved her, ſhe thinks, from a deſperate malady. In truth," continued Lady Middleton, " ſhe has ſuffered much."

" She is a moſt valuable acquiſition to the Berkley family," ſaid Mrs. Markham; " for ſhe unqueſtionably poſſeſſes all thoſe indefinable attractions which excluſively conſtitute the great art of pleaſing; ſhe appears to have principles alſo of ſuch honour and integrity, as makes her truly ineſtimable. She made an obſervation the other day, that ſpoke the refinement of her ideas, and ſtruck me very forcibly.—On reading that unfortunate

tunate affair between Lady E—— and Mr. T——, which the newſpapers have been ſo very elaborate on—' Alas!' ſaid ſhe, ' to what a dreadful ſituation has ſhe reduced herſelf! To our lives there is a period, but diſhonour is everlaſting.'—Thus ſhe really appears to me; and I am confident, did ſhe know her ſituation, which pray Heaven ſhe never may! the conſequences, either on her life or intellects would be moſt ſerious and alarming."

" We ſhall uſe ſuch methods, I hope," ſaid the Ducheſs, " as to prevent a poſſibility of it."

The conference between Lord Seal and Lady Sandford laſted until dinner was announced. There were evident traces of ſatisfaction on her countenance; ſo that when ſhe joined the company, every body judged ſhe had been pleaſed by the propoſals made by Lord Seal. This could not fail of giving Lady Middleton real pleaſure; for ſhe had conceived already a ſtrong attractive

influence prevailing in her heart for Lady Sandford.

On the recovery of Lady Mary, Lord Seal was to return to the caſtle; and Lady Sandford was to accompany him when he went back to the Abbey, where a reconciliation was to take place between her and her Lord.

When the Marquis went to Paris, on his way to where Mr. Beaumont was confined, if the reader recollects, he raiſed the hopes of Mademoiſelle M—— by undertaking a viſit to the Marquis and Marchioneſs of M——, to gain their forgiveneſs of their fair runaway. But previous to his arrival in Paris, they had gone to Lyons on ſome important affair, and were not expected to return for ſome months: however, the letters ſhe wrote his Lordſhip left at the Hotel M——, to be forwarded, ſo that ſhe looked every day for an anſwer. Hope one moment would raiſe her to the higheſt

higheſt pinnacle of happineſs—then would ſhe give a looſe to all her native livelineſs; then again fear would aſſail her, and ſhe would fly to Lady Middleton and Mrs. Markham, burſt into tears, ſay it was impoſſible ſhe could ever be forgiven, and hurry away into ſome of the plantations to hide her ſorrow. She was all nature, and nature in her moſt charming garb; her extreme youth, great vivacity, and playfulneſs of manner delighted univerſally; while her childiſhneſs, and real innocence of heart, claimed from Lady Middleton almoſt parental regards.

Happy Mademoiſelle M—— to fall into ſuch hands! She would laugh and cry by turns at Lord Sandford's treatment of her; call herſelf the moſt fortunate creature in the world at being ſaved from his arts; ſhe would throw herſelf on her knees, croſs herſelf, and call upon the Bleſſed Virgin to protect and incline her father and mother's hearts to forgive her. She had no concealment; every thought, every word flowed

unpremeditatedly. She was a character Mr. Selwin took infinite delight in; he loved to hear her innocent flights.—" She prays and dances," he would ſay, " in the ſame moment!—What a foil to work upon!—What a pure heart has Mademoiſelle M—!"

The rejoicings at Ankerwick Caſtle for the ſafety and return of Mr. Beaumont, had been put off on account of the dangerous ſtate Lady Mary Berkley was in. The evening of his return from the Abbey all the bells in every ſteeple within miles of the caſtle, were ſet ringing; but it was thought proper to defer every other demonſtration of joy until the recovery of ſo near a relative of Lady Middleton.

On the report of her Ladyſhip being out of danger, they were ordered to commence. All the families around were invited. The illuminations were very grand. Many of the devices were applicable to the occaſion, with very beautiful tranſparent paintings, emblematic

emblematic of Mr. Beaumont's escape from the robbers in the forest of ——. The gifts of different Deities, laid at the feet of Lady Middleton, with many smaller of a similar kind, embellished the walls of the castle, and added to the gaiety and pleasure of the scene. A concert and ball concluded the evening.

For three days the gala continued; the second day of which arrived Lady Matilda Summers, to the very great delight of the whole party, particularly Lady Middleton, whose friendship for that charming girl gained strength daily. She came about two o'clock in the afternoon, quite unexpectedly;—she was struck with the alteration in the appearance of the Marquis.

"Ah George!" said she, "why did you ever see my too lovely friend?"

"Hush!" said he; "we are all joy here. I have now no time to think of my own sorrow; yet, surely, when those I so much

love are happy, I cannot once for a moment reflect that I am not so. I wish my father and mother had joined you in your visit: I would rather meet them here than any where;—this angel would excuse my long absence; to you, alone, they must look for all their future expectations."

"Ah, my dear brother! this was what I feared."

"Well," rejoined he, "we will talk no more of this now.—Lady Middleton's second self is arrived at the castle—my sweet Matilda is the only woman in the world like her fair friend. Half a hundred beaux will lay their hearts at your feet ere you get up to town again; the little blind God will play you a false trick, depend upon it."

"I begin seriously," replied Lady Matilda, "to wish my heart a little more vulnerable, for my father is really harsh with me; he insists upon my making an establishment."

"Well, my love," said the Marquis, "I this morning, in a visit I paid at Mr.

Mr. Williams's, ſaw a man I think will pleaſe you;—the truth is, the general run of people will never ſuit either of us. This man, however, ſeems of ſuperior mould;—we ſhall ſee if my prediction ſpeaks truth or falſehood."

"Falſehood you may rely upon it," ſaid ſhe; "I never was leſs inclined to like your ſex than at preſent. I would rather attend you in your tour, than any ſcheme that can be propoſed to me."

"Well, we ſhall ſee," ſaid he. "If you are of the ſame mind when I am going, I promiſe to take you with me, and we will get Mrs. Markham to join us."

"Charming!" ſaid Lady Matilda; "nothing could be more to my mind."

They ſeparated to dreſs for dinner.

Juſt as the Marquis was ordering his man to attend him, Mr. Henry ran up to him.—"My dear fellow," ſaid the Marquis,

" are you arrived? I am delighted to ſee you. How long have you been here?"

" About half an hour.—The moment I paid my duty to my Lady and Mr. Beaumont, I flew to find your Lordſhip; I have been in almoſt all the apartments, and could no where find you.—Have you finally finiſhed Beaumont's affair?"

" Not quite; I ſhall go to-morrow or the next day to the Duke of Devon; by his directions I came from the Abbey: but now all that family are in the greateſt confuſion.—Lady Mary Berkley is ſo ill, they do not expect her recovery; if her peace is made above," ſaid the Marquis, " it will be a very great happineſs for this world that ſhe ſhould no longer be an inhabitant of it. —It is a foul fiend, my friend!—Come with me, and I will tell you the whole hiſtory."

" I have it in my pocket, my Lord. —Mr. Beaumont, not expecting me, had written the whole, and was juſt ſending off his letter when I arrived.—I am all impatience to read it, and ſhall attend you half

half an hour before we assemble in the drawing-room.—I have some matters, my Lord, I wish to consult you upon."

"I shall be at leisure, my friend, in a very short time; my toilet is never long making;—tell me, however, first, how long will these lawyers take in preparing all necessary papers?"

"About a month—Mr. Beaumont's gold has brought it to that; had he not been so liberal, I suppose they would have taken three.—I must acknowledge that I was astonished at the magnitude of the different estates, which increases their trouble; the Duke of Devon and Mr. Beaumont must go to London in about a week.—The solicitor is an active man, and I have promised him a large reward if every thing is concluded by that time;—he explained to me why it was impossible a shorter time should answer.—Every thing, my Lord, that only approaches law, is tedious and vexatious;—pray God I may never have any thing to say to it, or any friend

friend of mine, as it is a ſure ſource of miſery!"

"It is a very good wiſh," ſaid the Marquis, going off to hi room; "I hope ſincerely you never may!"

## CHAP. V.

WHEN the family were all aſſembled in the drawing-room, except Lord Loveſdale and Mr. Henry, Lady Matilda aſked for the latter.

"I am dying to ſee that fine fellow," ſaid ſhe; "George has written ſo much of him, I am more than half in love already."

Juſt

Juſt then he made his appearance. Mr. Beaumont introduced him.

" Well," whiſpered he to Lady Matilda, " how do you find yourſelf?"

" Why, really not at all well," ſaid ſhe, laughing. " In fact, I love him almoſt as much as if he were my younger brother." She congratulated him on his ſucceſs in his firſt eſſay in the world.—" All the relatives of Mr. Beaumont, of whom I am one, are bound to you. I wiſh we had known you were in town; my father would have waited on you—we would have all joined to make your time paſs pleaſantly."

He bowed with much modeſty and grace.

" Your Ladyſhip does me too much honour."

Lady Matilda was quite charmed with him.

" Well,

" Well, Gertrude," ſaid this lively girl, " if ever I run away, and play the fool, it will be with this ſweet fellow; every feature, every movement, ſpeak him a man of birth, honour, and virtue.—I ſhall be uneaſy until I find out who he is;—truſt me, he muſt be deſcended from no common ſtock:—I am much miſtaken if he does not rank with ourſelves."

" I certainly think ſo," ſaid Lady Middleton, " and rejoice that you coincide with me in opinion;—aſſuredly his family, when known, will do him as much honour as he will do them."

During this converſation, Henry was making out Mademoiſelle M——'s bad Engliſh.

" We are in a dilemma," ſaid Mr. Henry; " I don't ſpeak French, and Mademoiſelle cannot ſpeak Engliſh."

" Me teach you de French, you teach me de Engliſh," ſaid ſhe.

" It will be a dangerous experiment," ſaid Lady Matilda; " they may teach each other more than they now intend.—You had better, Mademoiſelle M——, learn of Mr. Selwin."

" I fancy it will be more prudent," ſaid Lady Middleton.

" You may be certain of it," ſaid Lady Matilda.

Dinner was announced, during which all ſeemed gay, lively, and happy; even the Marquis appeared in uncommon ſpirits.

" What do you think, brother," ſaid Lady Matilda; " Mr. Henry is engaged in nothing leſs than teaching Mademoiſelle M—— Engliſh, and Mademoiſelle, in return, is to teach Mr. Henry French."

" Take care, my friend," ſaid the Marquis; " I fear you will think more of the teacher than of her leſſons."

" It would be impoſſible to do otherwiſe," ſaid Mr. Henry, colouring.

" Poor

"Poor Henry!" ſaid Mrs. Markham; "his cheeks too often partake of the colour of his coat."

"The profeſſion he has made choice of," ſaid Mrs. Selwin, "I fear will ſoon rob him of his native baſhfulneſs."

"It will never rob him, however, of his native worth," ſaid Mr. Selwin; "nor am I quite certain it will have that effect on his modeſty."

"What de you be ſay, dear Madam?" ſaid Mademoiſelle M——. "Me ſay de ting be nót right."

"Pardon me," replied Mrs. Selwin, "I really did not hear what you ſaid; we were ſpeaking of Mr. Henry."

"I be de ver glad; I was tinking you be laugh at my bad Engliſh."

"Thoſe fears will ſoon be at an end, Madam," ſaid Mr. Selwin; "you learn with great facility; you will ſoon ſpeak with the fluency of a native."

"Mon Dieu!" ſaid ſhe, "dat will not never be, I tink."

"We

" We ſhould," ſaid Lady Middleton, " continue to ſpeak nothing but French, that our ſociety might prove more agreeable to you; but we have Mr. Selwin's poſitive injunctions never to ſpeak French, in the hope that, though it is unpleaſant to you in the beginning, it will prove ſerviceable to you in the end."

" I be de ver much obligee," replied this ſweet girl.

Mr. Beaumont ſaid, if it was agreeable to Lady Middleton, there was nothing he longed ſo much for as a water party;—Lady Matilda is the fondeſt creature in the world of it.

" Oh hideous!" ſaid her Ladyſhip.—" Have you a mind to kill me?"

" Mon Dieu!" ſaid Mademoiſelle M—; " 'tis de baddeſt ting in de world.—I ſuffer ſo bad; it is ver bad ting; me hope Lady Middleton do not tink make me go."

" By

" By no means, Mademoiſelle; you are to do juſt as you pleaſe."

" Me be ver much obligee," ſaid ſhe; " me won't go no water den."

" It is ten thouſand pities," ſaid Mr. Selwin, " that either Lady Matilda or Mademoiſelle M—— ſhould find themſelves uneaſy in any thing that occurs; if the ladies will place themſelves under my care to-morrow, I think I ſhall be able to put them in a method of never being afraid on the water, unleſs in real danger."

" But, my dear Sir," ſaid Lady Matilda, " the real danger may come in the moment of apparent ſafety."

" Common life is ſubject, very nearly, to as great viciſſitudes," rejoined Mr. Selwin. " Are we then never to enjoy health, becauſe the next moment may bring pain?"

" True," ſaid Lady Matilda; " but you know neither the winds nor waves will obey us."

" The winds and waves, believe me," ſaid Mr. Selwin, " are not ſo terrific as both

you

you and this young lady ſeem to think. —A little reſolution and perſeverance will convince you of the truth of what I aſſert. Put yourſelves under my care, and I ſtill hold my opinion, that I will not only take from you all fear, but make you both fond of the water."

Things were ſettled accordingly, and a water party ordered for the next day.

"Henry," ſaid Lady Middleton, "we appoint you maſter of the ceremonies; and from twelve o'clock to-morrow we devote ourſelves to you."

"I ſhall endeavour, my Lady," ſaid he, "to anſwer your expectations."

They now ſeparated, and in two hours the rooms began to fill.

Lady Middleton ſpent thoſe two hours alone. She had that happy art of having time to herſelf, though ſurrounded by company;

company; and from her management of that moſt precious of all things, which hangs ſo heavy on the hands of numbers, yet ever regretted when paſt, that a large portion of every day ſhe contrived to devote to retirement. She daily converſed and read with Mr. Selwin; and one in every month was ſet apart for the inſpection of her accounts. The moſt minute article in every department of expenditure was given to Mr. Selwin the day before he preſented it to Lady Middleton, which ſhe noted down herſelf in ſo regular a manner, that at one view ſhe could tell the exact ſituation of her affairs. Her economy was equal to her charity;—ſhe allowed no waſte, by which means ſhe would ſay—"I ſhall be able to be juſt to all."—A certain ſum of money ſhe ſet aſide for relieving her tenantry if they met with any loſſes from domeſtic misfortune, or a bad ſeaſon.

"There are many who have every inclination

nation to be liberal and charitable, but find they cannot afford it from the embarraſſment of their affairs; ſo neceſſary, my good friend," would ſhe ſay to Mr. Selwin, "is regularity and economy to all ranks of people."

While the reſt of the family were dreſſing, and preparing for the ball, Lady Middleton was ſhut up alone, contemplating the happineſs ſhe enjoyed, retracing the terrors of the paſt dangers, and imploring the protection of Him, who alone can raiſe or depreſs us. When ſhe heard the porter ring his firſt bell, ſhe aroſe, and in that heavenly frame of mind, that content and a conſciouſneſs of doing right give us, ſhe walked into the green-room of the theatre, in which tea was to be ſerved that night. The excellent comedy of the School for Scandal was to be performed, and great expectations were entertained of two female performers of very great theatrical and muſical talents, who had lately come to ſettle in the neighbourhood of the caſtle.

It

It may be proper to obſerve, that as the theatre was in one of the back wings of the caſtle, and remote from all the reception rooms, the green-room was originally laid out for what may more properly be termed a drawing-room; both its ſize, finiſh, and furniture were adapted for company. Here then vaſt crowds aſſembled; for fifty-four beds were ordered to be in readineſs that night at the caſtle, and the inn had fourteen prepared for the accommodation of the families who came from too great a diſtance to return to their own reſidences.

The performers, who were all gentlemen and ladies except two, were at tea in a ſmall apartment near the green-room. Three Officers, who were to perform the parts of Sir Peter Teazle, Joſeph, and Charles Surface, were determined to add all in their power to the entertainment of the night; and, unknown to any of the family, they appeared in a ſmall orcheſtra, that ſometimes ſerved for

for the domeſtics of the caſtle to ſit in, and ſometimes for a few muſicians.

The late Lord Middleton, in all his entertainments, introduced muſic whenever it was poſſible;—theſe gentlemen, in maſks and dominos, to the infinite ſurpriſe and delight of Lady Middleton, appeared, and ſung ſome excellent and ludicrous catches; and ſo much did they excel, that peals of laughter and applauſe broke from every individual. When they diſappeared, the company moved into the boxes; the pit and gallery were occupied by all the different domeſtics of the caſtle, and of the company aſſembled, with the farmers' wives and daughters contiguous. The green boxes were always ſet apart for the charity children and their teachers. The whole number, including the performers, made up four hundred and forty-four perſons. The parts of Lady Teazle and Mrs. Candour by the two Miſs Wilmots, were capital, in true character, and not overdone. Sir Peter,

Joſeph, and Charles were ſo highly ſupported, that the author himſelf could not have wiſhed for more juſtice to his piece.—It went off beyond the expectation of the ſevereſt critic.

Lord Melville, in company with Mr. Williams, did not arrive until after the beginning of the laſt act, from their carriage having broke down ſix miles from Earſley, the ſeat of Mr. Williams, and their being obliged to ſend back for another.

As ſoon as the play was over, Mr. Williams brought his Lordſhip into Lady Middleton's box, and introduced him to the whole family. None but Lord Loveſdale had ever ſeen him before; he was the gentleman his Lordſhip had mentioned to his ſiſter that morning. They ſeemed much pleaſed with him; he was very young, and handſome.

"My eyes," ſaid he, addreſſing Lady Middleton, "are but newly opened; they have

have never given me pleaſure before, and when I quit your preſence, they ought to be cloſed for ever; for ſure, after what they now behold, they can never be gratified again."

"I ſhall endeavour then to do you all the good in my power," ſaid Lady Middleton, gaily, "by introducing a friend of mine to you before you inflict ſuch a puniſhment on yourſelf; if you hold the reſolution to be blind the reſt of your life, I ſhall then have done all that hoſpitality and good wiſhes demand."

"She muſt be matchleſs indeed," ſaid his Lordſhip, "if ſhe can make me change."

Lady Matilda juſt then entered the box, followed by Mr. Henry.

"Here is my fair friend, my Lord; let me preſent you to Lady Matilda Summers. —Matilda, my love, this is Lord Melville, who, I am ſorry to ſay, is in danger of loſing his eyes; he talks of a total blindneſs."

"The air of Ankerwick," ſaid Mrs. Markham, "is thought to be ſovereign for the eyes."

"Is it not ſuppoſed too dazzling?" ſaid his Lordſhip; "ſo many bright ſtars not only affect the eyes, but the heart."

"Alas!" ſaid Mrs. Markham, "you talk of two complaints; I fear we ſhall never cure you of ſuch a complication of diſorders."

"I fear," ſaid he, "it is not in the power of medicine to cure the diſeaſe I have imbibed this night."

They moved into the green-room, where all ſorts of refreſhments were ſerved; and while the company walked about, the moſt delightful ſounds, not too loud to diſturb converſation, and juſt audible enough to raiſe the ſoul, were heard from the band, ſhut out by a diſtance that made it raviſhingly harmonious.

Lady Mary Montreville, who was one of thoſe talkative, inſipid characters that think

think family and great riches entitle the poſſeſſor to admiration and reſpect without either talents, good ſenſe, or urbanity of manners, came up to Lady Middleton with all the unmeaning giggle of a girl of fifteen.

"Indeed," ſaid ſhe, "your Ladyſhip is quite raviſhing; we come here but to admire."

"Do you allow that, Lady Mary?" ſaid Lord Melville.

"Why, to be ſure I do," ſaid ſhe; "muſt not every body admire the happy arrangements always made by her Ladyſhip? —The amuſements of Ankerwick Caſtle are ſo varied, one never tires; we are always ſure of finding ſomething new; they muſt be hard to be pleaſed indeed, who are not ſo here."

"Then," ſaid Lord Melville, "I ſhould ſtrongly recommend it to you to come here as often as you can, for I never had the honour of hearing you ſay you were pleaſed before."

His Lordſhip turned round, and joined another party.

" That is the moſt intolerable young man about town," ſaid Lady Mary; " I proteſt he gets quite rude; I wiſh he would go abroad again, for really he is quite ſhocking."

" What," ſaid Lord Loveſdale, who came up at the beginning of this ſpeech, " do you find fault with the handſome, witty, gay Lord Melville? He is the reigning favourite of the town;—how can you be ſo old-faſhioned?"

" Old or new-faſhioned," ſaid her Ladyſhip, " I think him quite inſufferable."

" Come, Melliſh," ſaid the Marquis, " come here and learn Lady Mary Montreville's opinion of poor Melville."

" Let us not talk," ſaid ſhe, " any more about him; I am quite ſick of his name."

" It is a name," ſaid General Melliſh, " that never ſickened the ear of a female before;

before; both men and women ſeem to allow him great merit.—What is your opinion of him, Lady Middleton?"

Here Lady Matilda and a large party joined her, to her great relief; for Lady Mary was grown quite tireſome. The company adjourned into the ball-room. Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton, Lord Melville and Lady Matilda, Lord Loveſdale and Mademoiſelle M——, Mr. Henry and the Honourable Miſs Clarges—theſe were all aſſorted, and not to be rivalled in the room. Mademoiſelle M—— ſhone in the dance; ſhe had all the eaſe and vivacity of her country, with all the modeſty and purity ſo natural at her age.

"Do you think this lively French woman," aſked Mr. Beaumont, "worthy of my friend?"

"Would to God," ſaid Lady Middleton, "the Marquis thought of her!"

"She is charming—is ſhe not?" ſaid he;

"I am half in love with her myſelf; I never ſaw, except one or two, any woman dance half ſo well;—ſhall we after this, dance cotillions?"

"Yes," ſaid Lady Middleton, "if you prefer them.—I fancy they will be as well received as country dances."

"I know," ſaid he, "your Ladyſhip likes them."

"Better, infinitely," ſhe replied.

"And that was my reaſon for propoſing them," ſaid he. "Melville told me you were teazed to death by that frightful old cat Lady Mary Montreville, and I ſent Lady Matilda to relieve you."

She ſmiled, and thanked him.

"There ſeems to be open war declared between her and Lord Melville; I thought ſhe would have boxed him."

"She is juſt that ſort of character," ſaid Mr. Beaumont, "that every body ſeems privileged to be rude to; ſhe is haughty, ill-natured,

ill-natured, vindictive, and malicious; she has the wealth of an emperor, and the soul of a miser; her nephew, one of the finest fellows in England, is a great friend of Lord Melville's;—he is her heir at law, and do you know his income is but three hundred pounds per annum, and this woman, with more money than she knows what to do with, never gives him a guinea—she told him, some time ago, not to expect one from her during her life.—It is her treatment of this young man that makes Lord Melville doubly detest her.—Fortunately she has been attached to an Officer in the Guards, who jilted her, and married a beautiful young woman, with whom he lives very happy; and she has made a resolution never to marry, which she is too religious to break;—so that Montreville, if he has the good fortune to outlive her, must in the end possess her great estates, with, I suppose, at least one hundred thousand pounds; for she does not, I have been

assured, spend one thousand pounds year, though she is in the receipt of eight."

Lord Lovesdale came up to them.

"Do you know," said he, "I have a very great notion that Matilda's heart is softened at last. Melville is the man."

"We could wish nothing better for her," said Mr. Beaumont.—"Lady Middleton wishes to dance cotillions; will you propose them, and make your party?—Speak to Lord Melville and Mr. Henry."

The sets were soon formed; and so much pleased were the company with this arrangement, that they danced till one o'clock, when they adjourned to supper, which was prepared in the great hall, as was always the case when the company was so numerous. The repast was most sumptuous; the tables were in the highest style of ornament; the room was hung with coloured lamps in elegant devices; and as the company entered, they were

were delighted with ſounds of the ſofteſt muſic, which ſeemed to proceed from above.

"Well," ſaid Lady Mary Montreville to the old Ducheſs of C——, "Lady Middleton's revenues muſt be immenſe to admit of all this grandeur.—I think ſhe exceeds her father, the late Lord, who was ſo remarkable for ſplendour."

"And yet," ſaid her Grace, "the Ducheſs of Devon aſſured me, ſome time ago, there has been a ſaving of thirty-three thouſand pounds ſince this ſurpriſing young woman came in poſſeſſion of the eſtates, without the leaſt diminution of any one article of expenditure.—The Duke of Devon you know is her guardian, of courſe the Ducheſs muſt know."

"Unqueſtionably," replied Lady Mary; "and yet it is inexplicable to me."

"It is very eaſily accounted for," ſaid the good old lady; "ſhe admits no waſte either in her expences, or on her eſtates; her domeſtics are faithful; ſhe takes upon

herſelf the care of their fortunes; they are all ſure of enjoying under her comforts for their old age, and they neither have the inclination nor ability to make fortunes for themſelves by fraud and impoſition.—The confuſion that half our Nobility and gentry ſuffer their affairs to get into, is the cauſe of that ruin we ſee every day in the greateſt eſtates of this kingdom; they leave every thing to their domeſtics, who, when they find themſelves unreſtrained, give as great a looſe to diſſipation and extravagance as their Lords and maſters, and in general never ſtop until the one is ruined, and the other diſgraced."

"Yes, yes," ſaid Lady Mary, "ſervants are the deſtruction of all fortunes."

"Pardon me," rejoined the Ducheſs, "Lady Middleton does not find it ſo. I have not found it ſo myſelf. I could mention ſeveral families very happy in their domeſtics. The fault lies, I believe, in ourſelves. A prudent, regular, proper management will always prevent the evil.

Worth

Worth and integrity are to be found in that class as well as in any other."

"I have, however, never found one to be depended on," said Lady Mary; "they are the greatest trouble of life; I am always changing, and do not find I am at all the better."

"That is precisely the reason," resumed the Duchess. "A certain liberality and attention to their present comfort and future establishment, will generally, if not always, procure you that satisfaction in your family I have so often heard you complain that you never enjoy. The line must be drawn with judgment between each party; those who do no good offices to their fellow-creatures, can expect to receive none in return; —there are reciprocal duties which, if we do not attend to, our lives are not spent with that use to the community, or that pleasure to ourselves, which, from our rank, fortune, and situation, we seem to be assured of at the outset of life: but some people have the happy art, without fortune, to do more good,

good, and gain more friends than others who poſſeſs great wealth."

It is thought that the amiable Ducheſs alluded to Mr. Montreville, and Lady Mary's conduct towards him; who wiſhing to change the converſation, from a conſciouſneſs of its having her for its object, obſerved, with a great ſhare of ill-temper, that there was one thing ſhe diſliked in all the entertainments at Ankerwick—there was always too much muſic introduced.

"It never obtrudes, I think," ſaid the Ducheſs; "for it is ſo happily conducted as to charm without incommoding."

"I think it is very tireſome," ſaid Lady Mary.

"Why ſo?" aſked the Ducheſs.

"Becauſe—becauſe I don't like it."

"That is very explanatory, indeed," returned the Ducheſs, who, quite ſick of the perſon chance had placed at her ſide during ſupper, ſhe addreſſed Mr. Clarges,

from whom ſhe expected more entertainment.

"What in nature," ſaid he, "could have induced your Grace to enter into converſation with that moſt intolerable Lady Mary Montreville;—ſhe is, beyond meaſure, loquacious without the leaſt talent for converſation; illiberal in her ſentiments, illiterate, and weak, ſhe can utter nothing to inform or entertain."

"You are too ſevere," ſaid the Ducheſs, "on poor Lady Mary; ſhe is not quite ſo diſagreeable as you repreſent her."

"I this moment," ſaid he, "obſerved to General Melliſh, who diſlikes her as much as the reſt of the world do, that dame Fortune never placed two more oppoſite characters ſide by ſide at a pleaſant party, than in ſeating her by your Grace.—I have had the greateſt pity for you, and made two efforts to relieve you by putting a gentleman on each ſide of her; for though there were appointed two ladies to every gentleman,

gentleman, I would have taken upon me Lady Middleton's diſpleaſure, and infringed the rule of the night, in compaſſion to your Grace."

"Ten thouſand thanks for your kind intentions; but I have ſo much pleaſure in contemplating that charming young woman, Lady Middleton, that nothing can make me unpleaſant when I am ſo near her."

Lady Middleton looked at the Ducheſs, to ſay—"I fear thoſe late hours will be too much for you;" and inſtantly ſeveral around her Ladyſhip roſe with her, and the company began to diſperſe.—She moved towards the Ducheſs.

"We have been remarkably late to-night; I hope your Grace will not ſuffer."

"My dear Lady Middleton," replied the Ducheſs, taking her hand, and preſſing it, "does the care of an old woman engage you in the midſt of this gay ſcene?—Happy Beaumont!" lowering her voice; "thy lot is

is indeed to be envied by every man in England!"

Lady Middleton bluſhed.

"Good night, my ſweet young friend!" ſaid her Grace; "may you be as happy as I have always wiſhed you!" So putting her hand under Mr. Henry's arm, he led her to her coach.

"And pray," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe quitted the houſe, "at what hour does the regatta begin to-morrow?—I find you are to be maſter of the ceremonies."

"Lady Middleton mentioned twelve for the hour, as ſhe foreſaw we ſhould be rakes to-night."

"Good night!" ſaid the Ducheſs; "I hope you will let me ſee you the day after; I ſhall long to hear all about it."

By the time Mr. Henry had returned to the

the hall, every body had quitted it but one gentleman, whom he went up to, and who proved to be Lord Melville, with his head on his arms, in the poſture of ſleep. As he was turning away, undetermined what to do, his Lordſhip haſtily roſe as if from a dream, and ſeeing Mr. Henry, he ſtarted.

"Have you been aſleep, my Lord?"

"Yes—no; upon my ſoul I cannot tell, but it is time, is it not?"

"I think ſo," ſaid Mr. Henry, leading him out.

His gentleman was in waiting, and they parted—Mr. Henry to ſleep, his Lordſhip to think.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VI.

THE next day was uſhered in by French-horns, hautboys, and clarionets in the great court of the Caſtle, with two trumpeters, mounted on beautifully capariſoned horſes, preceded by an herald, proclaiming—"If any Knight dares to diſpute the palm of beauty, let him come forth, and learn from the dauntleſs arm of the Knight of the Roſe, that none can equal the matchleſs Princeſs that enchains him in the bonds of love."

At that moment two elegant figures, in complete armour, mounted on fully capariſoned courſers, rode into the liſts, and ruſhing

ruſhing on each other, began the fight. Strength, ſkill, and agility were ſhewn in every attack and parry of the well-directed ſabre; ſuch, and ſo admirable was the addreſs with which the aſſault and defence were conducted, that the ſpectators gave the loudeſt marks of applauſe. At length the Knight of the Roſe unhorſed the Knight of the Viſor, and the trophies of the conqueror were laid at the feet of Lady Middleton, when, bending on one knee, the Knight of the Roſe raiſed his beaver, and the beautiful face of Beaumont preſented itſelf to the view of the lovely Gertrude.

" Matchleſs Princeſs!" he cried, in all the chivalric action and tone, " deign to behold your ſlave, and from the reſplendent radiance of your eye, fire his ſoul with emulation, to lay at his feet ſuch hardy, daring Knights as proudly brave his unerring arm, and dare to diſpute that Dulcinea del Ankerwick outſhines all other Princeſſes

as

as much as Don Quixotte all other Dons and Knights that ever ſhook a lance!"

The ſhouts of pleaſure and gaiety, the loud laugh, and animated delight ſhewed that this little *bagatelle* was very much reliſhed, and was a pleaſant prelude to the entertainment of the day. They deſcended, in the higheſt ſpirits and mirth, to the lake, where they were agreeably ſurpriſed with five twelve-oared barges, fantaſtically and elegantly decorated; the rowers dreſſed in white and black velvet caps, which had the lighteſt and moſt charming effect.

On the appearance of the company, a trumpet ſounded the ſignal for the race to begin. All the boats ſtarted at the ſame moment; they deſcribed a circle of two miles and an half, in full view of the numerous ſpectators. The gentlemen had large bets depending, which were ſettled early that morning; and every face was delighted

delighted and tranſported with the lively ſcene.

" Now," ſaid Mr. Selwin, addreſſing Lady Matilda, and Mademoiſeile M——, " would you find any reluctance to be in one of theſe pretty boats that cut through the water with ſuch velocity? Frequent ſcenes of this kind would remove the prejudice you have conceived."

" It is beautiful, I admit, to look at," replied her Ladyſhip, " but I fear you will not be able to make me a proſelyte to your opinion—that I ſhall become fond of that uncertain element."

" I have too high an idea of your Ladyſhip's underſtanding to ſuppoſe you can thus be a ſlave to habit. Truſt me, your fear exiſts in prejudice; ſurely argument and conviction muſt remove it.—Lady Matilda and my charming pupil here, I know are characters above affectation; they ſhould be free from all fooliſh apprehenſion."

The

The boats now all arrived, and a barge Lady Middleton had given Mr. Henry, as his own, won the prize.

The company then embarked in four barges, elegantly decorated; all was light green and white, with which colours the dreſs of the rowers correſponded. As they moved off along the ſhore, the feathered oars ſeemed to keep time with the ſofteſt muſic. The calmneſs of the day and ſtillneſs of the waters made the ſkilful rowers exert their ſtrength, and quickly gain the oppoſite ſhore. Then the applauſe and eager acclamations of the crowd they left behind, which the fame of the entertainment had gathered from all the neighbouring villages, reſounded. The immediate ſucceſſion of loud and martial muſic, anſwered to the echoes of the hills that ſurrounded.—The ſun now ſhot too powerful a heat to be ſuſtained in the middle of the lake; the ſteady pilots, therefore, directed their courſe along the woody ſhore, and found

found a ſhelter from his buring rays, when a gentle weſtern breeze ſprung up to refreſh the hardy rowers. A ſtag, the ſtouteſt and fleeteſt of the herd, bounded along the diſtant plain, and, ruſhing from the hot purſuit of vigorous hounds, he headlong drives his courſe; then up the ſummit of the higheſt hill he mounts;—the dogs, deep-toned, purſue, and quickly down into the thickeſt ſhades he bends his rapid way; now along the woody verges of the beauteous lake he ſcours, and leaves the joyous pack not far behind. The muſic ſtops; no ſound is heard but the hunter's cry; the deep, the ſharp, the eager note of each high-favoured dog reſounds, and echoing true from hill to hill, reverberates and dwells upon the ear. The huntſman now calls off the dogs, and leaves the wearied, frightened ſtag, who looks behind, and pants, and fears to ſtop; he almoſt thinks his danger paſt, yet loth to truſt, he trots along with ſlackened pace;—at length exhauſted, down beneath a ſpreading oak he reſts.

The

The barges now ſkim along the glaſſy ſurface, and by imperceptible degrees the mind is led to ſerious thoughts by ſolemn ſounds from a diſtant boat, in which the band was placed, when, turning round the laſt projection of this fairy ſcene, the ready watermen bend upon their oars, and quick as lightning change the ſcene. The ſecond lake, in all the majeſty of ſolitary nature, now appears; the waters, by a blackiſh hue, ſeem to partake of the gloom around; the ſun appears eclipſed by the high-towering mountains, cloathed with dark and ſtately pines, ſo thick of foliage as not to admit a ray of Sol's reſplendent beams;—the ſounds of ſavage muſic iſſuing from a cavern, the war-whoop, and an angry lion's roar, far in the moſt diſtant wilds, give the idea of an Indian ſcene.—Deep in the woods again the war-whoop is heard, and now the martial drums beat up to arms; a ſcattered firing, as if from different parties ſkirmiſhing, a *feu-de-joie*, and then a heavy cannonading comes on, that is echoed and

re-echoed back, then ſeems to ſtop, and now begins again, then faintly dies away.—Loud ſhouts of victory reach the gladdened ear, the trumpet's ſonorous notes proclaim the great defeat; and Mr. Henry appeared clad in armour, and mounted on a fiery courſer, when, pulling off his beaver, he waved it in the air, and gave three huzza's, which were anſwered by all the barges.—Then the band, in loudeſt notes, played the "Conquering Hero;" when, in a moment, the little airy fleet runs through a narrow ſtraight, and launches into a plain of ſparkling waters; they onward move a little way, and view with wonder and delight the different objects that now preſent themſelves. The grand and ſublime are left behind, and Nature, in her ſweeteſt dreſs, appears; the cultivated hills and verdant meads, covered with herds and flocks, relieve the eye; the pretty cottage, and the barking dog, the cackling geeſe, as one by one they follow to their home their proud and ſtately leader, ſtand waiting at the barn-door for food.—

The

The peaſants all, in honour of the day, are gaily dreſſed; their corn-fields ſtand neglected, ſome half cut down, the other half tempting, with their rich produce, the reaper's hand.

As the barges glide along, groups of happy villagers are ſeen, ſome dancing to the notes of ruſtic muſic, each happy ſwain with his favourite fair; they leave their ſports, and, with the voice of thankfulneſs and joy, hail with grateful ſhouts the ſafety of their future Lord. Large drafts of potent ale add ſtrength and ſpirits to the hardy race, and as the boats paſs off, the dance and jocund ſports go on.—Along the banks the neighing horſe and friſky heifer run, frighted by the noiſe; and thus this feſtive ſcene, ſo ſweet to man, drives from their paſtures the timid flocks of white and fleecy ſheep.

Now they approach the end of the third and laſt lake, and land at the foot of a grand pavilion, covered high in tufted trees. As they aſcend the ſteps of the building, they

hear a trumpet ſound;—they enter a large and ſpacious room, elegantly decorated, with the front quite open, and ſhaded by a Chineſe awning, from which they take in a view of the whole lake; a ſecond trumpet ſounds, and four ſix-oared barges appear juſt under the pavilion; theſe are manned by the charity boys, dreſſed in pale blue jackets and white caps, with wreaths of oak leaves; they ſtand up, each with his oar raiſed ſtraight in the air, and with eager look and anxious hope they impatiently wait. The third and laſt trumpet ſounds the ſignal to begin. With throbbing hearts, and arms ſtretched out on their oars, at the ſame moment they all ſtart. The ſhouts of applauſe that break from the numerous crowds, animate the lads, and each vies with the other; hope ſits on every face, and, to the infinite delight of the company in the pavilion, they almoſt keep together.—It was exactly two miles from the place they ſtarted, to the goal; all along the ſhore were crowds, whoſe voices reached the ſkies.

Now

Now the ſouls of the youths were inflamed with emulation as they rowed up to the pavilion; and ſo equally were their ſtrength and agility exerted, it was impoſſible to decide which was victorious, for they came up abreaſt. There were four equal prizes awarded, and the thanks of Lady Middleton ſent with them, which ſeemed to give more pleaſure than her Ladyſhip's liberal donations. There was a ſumptuous dinner ſerved in the pavilion, and at eight o'clock the company got into carriages, and returned to the caſtle.

## CHAP. VII.

THE ladies changed their dreſſes, and about nine o'clock they all aſſembled, with added numbers, in the ball-room. The converſation turned on the pleaſures of the day;—the happy arrangements made by Mr. Henry, were univerſally approved; nothing could be more charming than the ſound of the hunter's horns in the woods, the beauty of the ſtag flying before the hounds in full view of the company in the boats; the echo of the deep-toned hound delighted all; and then the grand effect of the different ſounds reverberating round and round thoſe vaſt and thickly cloathed hills, the roar of the lion ſo well imitated,

imitated, the war-whoop ſo exact, the happy coincidence of unexpected circumſtances, the claſhing of ſwords, firing in different and diſtant parts of the woods, the wonderful grandeur of the cannonade, which was ſo judiciouſly placed in a particular ſpot, famed for the extraordinary echo; the loud and joyous ſhouts of victory; and, laſtly, the appearance of Mr. Henry and his horſe, ſo truly characteriſtic, in a ſpot that ſeemed the only one on that ſide the lake that was ſufficiently cleared from wood to admit a horſe; and when the eye wandered over the vaſt mountains that ſeemed impenetrable, the imagination was worked up at the ſight of ſuch a phœnomenon as appeared on the inſtant of the clamorous ſhoutings, ſuch as they could ſcarcely believe real.

There was that in the manner, voice, and ſpirit of the young warrior, on his appearance at the little opening of the creek, that brought to the mind a natural picture of a conquering Chief in the moment

of victory. The ſpot too on which he ſtood on his beautiful and richly caparisoned courſer, whoſe open noſtrils and fiery eyes ſtill kept in mind the idea of a battle, appeared in perſpective from the ſtation of the little fleet, the effect of which, to a painter, is eaſily imagined.

General Melliſh, who had been on foreign ſervice many years, paid Mr. Henry ſome well-turned compliments on his happily imagined and well-executed military exploits; and concluded by ſaying he never received ſuch pleaſure from an entertainment in his life. He ſaid alſo, that he had been at the celebrated Killarney lakes, in Ireland, ſuppoſed to be ſuperior to any thing of the kind, and uncommonly remarkable for the ſtupendous mountains that tower above the lakes, whoſe echoes are not to be excelled. One of the moſt admired things at Killarney, in point of amuſement, is the ſtag-hunt, which he had two or three times been gratified with ſeeing; and though theſe hunts

hunts are conducted by people who are in the habit of it from their infancy, he muſt give the preference to that he had that morning ſeen; and many gentlemen joined him in thinking that the full cry of the hounds, at one particular part of the hunt, when the ſtag took a circuit nearly along the verge of the lake, was the fineſt thing they had ever heard or ſeen in that delightful ſport. Lady Middleton, they ſaid, gaily, kept the fineſt hounds in the world; that the ſtag-hounds, fox-hounds, and harriers exceeded any thing they had ever hunted with.

Lady Mary Montreville half ſcreamed—"Do you keep all theſe frightful things? What pleaſure can your Ladyſhip find in all theſe naſty dogs?"

"Did you never know, Madam," ſaid Lord Loveſdale, "that Lady Middleton leaps five-bar gates, ſix-feet pales, double quick-ſet hedges, ſtone——"

"Oh! ſtop, ſtop," interrupted Lady

Mary, " any one of thoſe is too much for the nerves of any woman in the world."

" Fortunately for the world," rejoined his Lordſhip, " Lady Middleton has no weakneſs of nerves, though great ſenſibility. Now I know ſome few who have no ſenſibility, though a wonderful ſhare of nerves."

Lady Middleton turned round, and engaged in converſation with another party.

" You don't mean to inſinuate, I hope," ſaid Lord Melville to the Marquis, " that Lady Mary Montreville is ſenſitive?"

" And pray, my Lord Melville," ſaid her Ladyſhip, " why ſhould you ſuppoſe I am not ſenſitive?"

" If you will be ſo good," returned his Lordſhip, " to give me the real definition of that word, or your idea of it, I ſhall moſt gladly give my anſwer to your queſtion."

" There is nobody I have ſo great a diſlike to talk to as your Lordſhip," ſaid ſhe,

ſhe, biting her lips with rage, " you are ſo odd and rude;—but do pray tell me, does Lady Middleton leap, and hunt, and all that?"

" You ſpeak now of a lady who appears to me never to do any thing out of character," anſwered Lord Melville; " my acquaintance with Lady Middleton is but of the day; but I will venture to aſſert ſhe neither does one nor the other.—Here ſhe comes, however, and I will take the liberty of aſking her."

She then applied to know if Lord Loveſdale was ſerious.

" I have been the moſt unfortunate man in the world," ſaid he, addreſſing Lady Middleton; " the Marquis has thrown Lady Mary Montreville into a violent nervous affection, by giving an account of your leaping over five-bar gates, ſtone walls, and fiſh-ponds; and I verily thought we ſhould have been deprived of her charming ſociety,

which would have been a loſs I could not have ſuſtained, and ſurvive."

" Pray don't mind him," ſaid Lady Mary; " he is quite intolerable; ſuch a mixture of gravity and gaiety, there is no bearing him."

Lady Middleton inwardly laughed at the eternal wrangling between this young Lord and Lady Mary; yet thought he would make no impreſſion in favour of his friend, though he were to be even more ſevere than he was. Lady Mary again repeating the queſtion of—" Surely you don't hunt and leap?" rouſed her, and ſhe anſwered,—though ſhe was very fond of riding on horſe-back, ſhe had not attained ſuch great perfection, or had ſo great a paſſion for it as to join in the ſports of the field; and as to leaping, as it was not neceſſary, ſhe had never exerted her reſolution ſo far as to attempt it.

" But

"But you keep hounds, don't you?—But I ſuppoſe not—that was in jeſt too."

"My father," ſaid Lady Middleton, "kept hounds, though he never hunted; and as I have been ſo happy as to have many male as well as female friends with me both in winter and ſummer, I keep them for their amuſement, not my own."

"Well," ſaid Lady Mary, "how kind to think ſo much for others!"

"Is it not an indiſpenſable duty to make ourſelves as agreeable in ſociety as we can?" replied Lady Middleton.

"One is never paid for it, I think," ſaid Lady Mary.

Mr. Henry, as maſter of the ceremonies, was the partner of Lady Middleton, and now came, to her great joy, to lead her to the dance, for ſhe found infinite difficulty in converſing with this lady. The Marquis and Mademoiſelle M—— were again together, and Lord Melville and Lady Matilda.

"I find,"

"I find," said Lady Middleton to Lord Lovesdale, "you have made me a perfect Diana; if I had not undeceived Lady Mary Montreville, she unquestionably would have given up my acquaintance."

"And would you grieve much at that?" said Mr. Beaumont.

"To myself," she replied, "it would have been a misfortune I could easily have got over; but my *Lord Melville*, in pity to *him*, I wish to cultivate her friendship; *she seems to be the attractive power that draws him to Ankerwick.*"

"Yes," said Mr. Williams, "her Ladyship's attachment to Colonel H——, of the Guards, has caused my friend Melville all the sorrows he has ever known, and is the means of those fits of melancholy I so often scold him for; she is the fair one he has selected, and we cannot wonder that he suffers so severely from the rejection of so divine a woman as Lady Mary Montreville;—if so great a misfortune had

had happened to me, I moſt certainly ſhould have ſhot myſelf."

Here there was a general laugh and lamentations over the unſucceſsful wooer, till Lady Middleton was glad to turn the converſation to another ſubject, leſt Lady Mary, or any of her connections, ſhould hear their ſarcaſms on this diſagreeable character.

They ſupped earlier than on the foregoing night, and the next day was to be engaged in horſe-racing, and at night a concert and cards. Mrs. Markham propoſed that there ſhould be no dancing, as Lady Middleton ſtill retained a delicacy of health ſince ſhe had had the meaſles, and ſhe feared too much dancing might injure her.

The horſes and carriages were at the door at ten o'clock the next morning; and they drove to the race courſe, which was at the further end of the park, and about two miles from the Caſtle.

The

The late Lord Middleton had been extremely fond of this ſport, though he confined it entirely to his own neighbourhood; he in general kept a few famous race-horſes, and would run them for amuſement only, his bets on one race never exceeding fifty guineas, and his horſes never ran but at home. Lady Middleton ſtill kept up two, and very frequently amuſed herſelf in ſeeing the grooms ride againſt each other; for ſhe early imbibed a love for the amuſement, and frequently ſmall parties attended her, and paſſed away a very agreeable morning at the courſe, which had been laid out with great judgment—a fine plain and gentle riſe, taking in a circle of four miles. A long room, which commanded a full view of the whole, ſerved as a ſhelter from a coming ſhower, or for a cold collation;—this morning an excellent *dejeuné* was provided in it, and the early ride increaſing the natural flow of animal ſpirits, gave a double reliſh to the repaſt; after which both gentlemen and ladies made their bets, and moſt incomparable

incomparable running added infinitely to the amuſement. Lord Melville and Mr. Henry rode themſelves the laſt race on Lady Middleton's Miſs Prim and Old Snap, the ſame that Lord Loveſdale and Mr. Henry rode the four miles' heat that was productive of ſuch a dreadful fever to the Marquis;—both horſes were of the ſame colour, a very light grey; there could ſcarcely be found two finer figures than the riders, and when they appeared dreſſed exactly alike in lilach ſilk jackets and yellow caps, every eye ſeemed raviſhed with their beauty. Mr. Henry and Old Snap, Lady Middleton's favourite horſe, arrived about a ſecond at the poſt before Lord Melville and Miſs Prim. The connoiſſeurs gave great credit to the manner of riding and judgment of both, but Old Snap had rather the foot of Miſs Prim.

It is impoſſible to do juſtice to the gaiety of this ſcene—it is eaſier to feel ſuch pleaſures than deſcribe them; a race well matched,

over

over a beautiful courſe, being productive of ſuch animating ſenſations, as it is impoſſible for a pen to give an adequate idea of.

After it was over, the great guns on the fortifications, of which there were twenty-four, were fired, and the bells ſet ringing all around, it being the laſt day of the rejoicings for Mr. Beaumont, and amidſt the acclamations of hundreds the company arrived at the Caſtle time enough to dreſs for dinner; and while the inhabitants within were feaſting, the ſame enjoyments were not omitted for the happy crowds without. On the green they aſſembled, where plenty, mirth, and ſeveral fiddles exhilarated every honeſt ſoul, who, from the heart, drank health and happineſs to the noble pair. The concert and rout were what concerts and routs generally are; ſome admirable catch-ſinging gave great ſatisfaction, and the following day quiet was again reſtored.

Lord

Lord Melville ſeemed to dread his ſeparation; his countenance was heavy and gloomy. Lady Middleton requeſted him to prolong his viſit at the Caſtle; and in compliment to him, ſhe likewiſe aſked Mr. Williams. Nobody could account for his Lordſhip's intimacy with this gentleman; but between them there ſeemed to be a real friendſhip, though no relative connection gave a ſanction for what ſeemed ſo ſurpriſing without it;—it afforded matter of great aſtoniſhment to all, that characters ſo widely different could, under almoſt any influence, move in uniſon, for in age alone there ſeemed to be the ſmalleſt ſimilarity.

Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Henry ſet off in a few days for the Abbey of Devon, and the day after Lady Sandford's return was expected at Ankerwick Caſtle from London, whither ſhe went during the entertainments, not chuſing, without the ſanction of her Lord, to appear in the world.

When

When the water party was deſcribed by the lively Mademoiſelle M—— to Lady Sandford, ſhe ſeemed in raptures; ſo much ſo, that to gratify and divert her, Lady Middleton, the moment Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Henry came from the Abbey, wiſhed to have another, conſiſting only of the family and two or three of thoſe of the neighbourhood Lady Sandford had been in the habit of meeting almoſt daily;—and though the boat-race was not ſo grand, nor the company ſo numerous, though there were neither tilt nor tournament, play nor ball, it was allowed there could not have been any thing more delightful: and they returned from an excurſion equally agreeable in the little minute circumſtances that have power ſufficient either to gild or ſhade each paſſing object.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VIII.

LORD Sandford, at the end of the fortnight, wrote to his father, to ſay another muſt elapſe ere he could repair to the Abbey, or meet Lady Sandford. This the Ducheſs ſignified to Lady Middleton; and obſerved that as a ſhort time would conclude the buſineſs of the lawyers, and that ſhe knew her Gertrude would give no unneceſſary delay to her marriage, it was very much the wiſh of Lord Seal to have the ceremony performed at the ſame time by Mr. Selwin that ſhould legally bind his ſon, and that they ſhould remain of the party until they went to London. She alſo wiſhed that Lady Sandford ſhould go to Court with Lady

Lady Middleton; and that, as proper overtures were made to Lady Sandford's family, through the medium of the Neapolitan Ambaſſador, they were all ſanguine in the expectation of a happy concluſion to ſo unhappy a beginning;—that the Duke intended preſenting his grandſon with twenty thouſand pounds on the day of his marriage, and that Lord Seal had purchaſed jewels for Lady Sandford to the amount of ten thouſand. Her Grace concluded her letter by ſaying, ſhe found Mr. Wentworth was with Lord Sandford, which gave them the greateſt pleaſure; that he had parted with all his domeſtics who were foreigners, giving each ſix months' wages in advance, and that the Lodge was to be ſold; that all who had acted under him in his affairs of gallantry were diſcharged, and that great alterations were taking place at Appleby for the reception of its future miſtreſs; that Lady Mary was getting much better, but would ſcarcely ſee any of the family except her ſiſter.

This account made Lady Middleton very happy. Mademoiſelle M——'s meeting Lord Sandford was a circumſtance that gave her ſome concern; but when ſhe expreſſed her fears to that lively girl, ſhe appeared ſo unembarraſſed, that her Ladyſhip very plainly perceived her bad opinion of his Lordſhip had totally removed any predilection ſhe had formed for him, and that he was no longer dear to her. Thus ſet at reſt about her young friend, ſhe adminiſtered ſuch conſolation to Lady Sandford, and ſpoke ſo highly of the reformation of her Lord, that—" I foreſee, dear Madam," ſaid ſhe, " my original idea of your totally reforming him will take place, and that all the happineſs I wiſh you, will be your's.—Speak, think you not I am a true prophet?"

" How happy a convert ſhould I be to your doctrine of ſecond ſight," ſaid Lady Sandford, " if your Ladyſhip's prophecy ſhould be fulfilled! But it is not, believe me, entirely for itſelf that a ſuſceptible heart

heart is doomed to ſuffer; moſt poignantly I have felt for his follies, almoſt as much as I did for my own miſery: and this total change from vice to virtue could not fail of bringing joy and happineſs to me, though I were for ever deprived of beholding him."

Every day ſtill recommended this lady more and more to Lady Middleton; and ſhe felt ſo intereſted in every thing that concerned her, that ſhe ardently wiſhed her couſin might equal the moſt worthy man, and that in time he might deſerve all the happineſs to be derived from ſuch a companion.

Lady Middleton was one morning driving out in one of her poney carriages with Mrs. Markham, and as they came up to a poſt-chaiſe, within about a mile of the Caſtle, they heard a foreigner endeavouring to make out from a peaſant whether Lady Middleton was at home; ſhe immediately ſtopped, and told him in French ſhe was the perſon he was enquiring for.

The

The Frenchman, who ſpoke very broken Engliſh, alighted from the chaiſe, and informed her he had letters for her Ladyſhip in his portfeuille from the Marquis of M——; he enquired very anxiouſly after Mademoiſelle M——, and Lady Middleton as anxiouſly begged to be informed of his embaſſy; ſhe hoped her dear young friend would meet nothing uncongenial to her wiſhes in the deciſion of her father and mother.

"Your Ladyſhip's letter," ſaid the Frenchman, "reconciled them entirely, and there was nothing but joy to be ſeen in every member of the Houſe of M—— when the happy tidings arrived of her being ſafe, and under the protection of Lady Middleton. Every body who knew Mademoiſelle, loved her, and grieved for her loſs; and great ſearches were made for her all over Italy, for thither we were given to underſtand ſhe had gone off with Lord B——, and every one knew he

had arrived at Nice. Our people," continued the Frenchman, "traced Lord B—— and the lady he carried off, who anſwered exactly the deſcription of Mademoiſelle M——, but did not come up with them for a conſiderable time; and there was no getting a view of the lady, for Lord B—— managed ſo well, thinking that it was his favourite that was purſued, that he led our meſſengers ſuch a dance as was ſurpriſing; while the friends of his Lady were all over England in purſuit of Lord Sandford; and thus did theſe two young Lords ſet all the parties in this buſineſs ſo aſtray, that they were able to elude the unwearied ſearch that was making after them."

All this was told in a moment by the Frenchman, who, returning quickly to the carriage, unlocked his portfeuille, took out the letters, and preſenting them to Lady Middleton, told her he was ready to wait upon her to Mademoiſelle M——.

"The

"The French," said Mrs. Markham, "have a peculiar way of doing every thing; a German would have taken more hours than this man has minutes, to have told this history."

She took the reins; and while they were driving to the Castle, Lady Middleton read the letters from the Marquis and Marchioness addressed to her. They contained expressions of the highest sense of obligation and gratitude for her care of their dear daughter, whose most excellent qualities and amiable disposition they dwelt much upon, and took great blame to themselves for attempting to force her to a life so repugnant to her wishes;—they begged the favour of Lady Middleton to assure her of their entire forgiveness, and accepted with many thanks the honour of her Ladyship's pressing invitation of their dear daughter remaining with her.

If the reader has formed an opinion of

the heart and manners of Mademoiſelle M—— from the deſcriptions already given in this work, he may eaſily conceive what it is impoſſible to give a juſt idea of. Her conduct on this occaſion was ſuch, as had ſhe been in the ſociety of ſtrangers inſtead of friends, they muſt have ſuppoſed her out of her ſenſes;—the different modes ſhe had of telling her happineſs to each individual of the circle, was truly comic; the miniatures of her father, mother, brothers, and ſiſters were ſent to her. When ſhe ſaw them all, ſhe burſt into tears, then ran out of the room; preſently ſhe returned, and gathering every perſon around her, ſhe ſhewed them one by one, at the ſame time deſcribing the beauty and goodneſs of each, and applying to the Chevalier to vouch for what ſhe ſaid.

For that day they thought ſhe had had enough of joy, which was really ſo violent, that Lady Middleton feared more might have proved fatal; but they had ſtill ſome-

thing

thing more to communicate, for this dear girl had been the favourite of her aunt, the only ſiſter of her mother. This lady had married an Engliſh gentleman, who was ſo ſtrongly attached to her, and having none of his own blood that he knew of, he left his eſtate in Yorkſhire to her, which was two thouſand a year, and totally at her diſpoſal, to do with it what ſhe thought beſt. This lady, after his death, went abroad, ſo that ſhe heard nothing of the innocent runaway. On her way to Paris, from whence ſhe intended bringing her favourite Mademoiſelle M—— to England, ſhe was taken ill, and died. Her remains, with her will and all her papers ſhe had with her, were conveyed to the Marquis's hotel at Paris. On opening the will they found ſhe had left her eſtate to Mademoiſelle M——, on condition ſhe became a Proteſtant; and her ready money, which was twelve thouſand pounds in the Engliſh funds, to the Marchioneſs of M——.

The Chevalier, a relative and friend of the family, was ſent off to England with her remains, which were to be interred in the cathedral of York, from whence he was to make the beſt of his way to Ankerwick Caſtle, with the olive branch to Mademoiſelle M——, and an account of her good fortune.

The next day the Chevalier, in preſence of Lady Middleton and Mrs. Markham, acquainted her with her aunt's liberality, and, giving her the will to read, ſhe gave it back to him.

"Take it to my dear, good father," ſaid ſhe; "he muſt have all this eſtate, and if it was ten times as much, tell him, it ſhould be all his; I will have nothing to do with wills, and houſes; and money, my father knows better than I what to do with them."

"Your father knowing well the liberality of your heart, Mademoiſelle," ſaid the

the Chevalier, " and ſuſpecting this, has provided againſt it by taking the liberty of making it over in truſt to Lady Middleton, if ſhe will be kind enough to become your guardian, as all the family are going to paſs three years in Italy; and being totally unconnected in England, it would be impoſſible for the Marquis to do you juſtice."

This reconciled her a little; but ſhe inſiſted that the firſt year's rent ſhould be given to her two dear ſiſters.

This was highly approved of, and all neceſſary papers executed for veſting the truſt in Lady Middleton accordingly. Mademoiſelle M—— did not, however, very much reliſh giving up the Bleſſed Virgin and all her ſaints; but Lady Middleton, who now looked upon her to be really her ward, ſolely conſigned to her care, put her under the tuition of Mr. Selwin to inſtruct her in the principles of the Proteſtant religion, and fit her for the neceſſary

renunciation of the Roman Catholic, previous to her being put in poſſeſſion of her eſtate.

While all was harmony and gaiety at the Caſtle, a far different ſcene was acting at the Abbey. The recovery of Lady Mary was moſt amazingly rapid, for ſhe gathered ſtrength ſo very faſt it was hardly poſſible to believe ſhe had been ill; her conſtitution being naturally good, ſhe threw off the fever, and neither a pale countenance nor languid appearance left any trace of recent illneſs behind. She had rode out in a carriage ſeveral times, and once on horſeback, when Lord Seal thought he might with great ſafety require an eclairciſſement of the part ſhe had taken in the perſecution and impriſonment of Mr. Beaumont. In the gentleſt manner he recapitulated the horrors of that dreadful buſineſs, and hoped ſhe would be able to account for it in ſome way that would change the ideas

ideas of her friends, which were now in a ſtate of uncertain diſapprobation.

There was nothing, however, to be ſeen in the effect this mild addreſs had on her that could tend to a reconciliation; and it affected Lord Seal ſo much, that the Duke, with his uſual good ſenſe and preciſion, ſpoke moſt feelingly on the ſubject. She opened not her mouth, or once from the beginning eſſayed to ſpeak;—the Ducheſs wiſhed to awaken her feelings by explaining to her the miſery and contrition of her brother; and that ſo highly praiſeworthy was the whole of his behaviour on this ſhocking affair, that even Mr. Beaumont himſelf ſolicited his friendſhip.

When the Ducheſs concluded, Lady Mary, with a ſtern countenance and offended air, looked at all preſent, and ſaid—"Theſe lectures might have been poſtponed until my recovery was more certain; in ſo near relatives, I own, I did not expect ſuch a

want of feeling; but truſt me, my good people, you much miſtake me if you ſuppoſe I have a temper or diſpoſition to bear theſe remonſtrances, which I perceive by your faces are not likely to end here. As to you, my Lord," addreſſing her father, "I muſt beg leave, in anſwer to what you have been pleaſed to ſay to me, to obſerve that as my mother left her fortune to me, independent of any ſhackle, to be paid me, if I choſe to demand it, on my being twenty-four, I have only to ſay that as I have exceeded that age one whole year, I find it indiſpenſably neceſſary to deſire that the whole may be paid into the hands of an agent whom I ſhall appoint to receive it; and as I mean to form an eſtabliſhment immediately, I ſhall expect you to fulfil my late mother's will. I renounce all expectations from my grandfather; and in you, my Lord, from what I have heard you ſay this day, I ſee the opinion you have formed of me; mine, perhaps, may not be more favourable of you, therefore the ſooner we

we part, the more quickly we ſhall all be reſtored to happineſs. I am too much offended at the ſeverity of your different addreſſes to me ever to ſubject myſelf to a repetition of them. What," ſaid ſhe, "but juſt out of a violent fever, warm from my bed, to be ſo rated at for a frolic, a joke! —Farewel! you ſhall never ſee Lady Mary Berkley at the Abbey of Devon more."

She aroſe, and walked out of the room. The blood forſook the cheeks of Lord Seal.

"Oh Heavens!" he cried, "do I dream? This ſurely is a viſion of the fancy—it cannot be real!—Mary, my darling daughter, whom I have loved as myſelf, never ſince the death of thy dear mother have I known happineſs out of thy ſociety!"

His voice failed, a cold dew burſt from every pore, his limbs ſhivered; he would have ſpoken, but excruciating agonies deprived him of utterance.

"Oh day of woe!" at length he exclaimed, "do I find so utterly unworthy the daughter I have loved as my life, the child I have looked to as the comfort, the support of a feeble old age?—Mary, Mary! is it thus I find you, turned upon your father with haughty ingratitude? and I, though late, too plainly see thou hast a heart which will drive thy doting father mad!"

All his strength with this exclamation seemed to fail him, and he again sunk into a most languid state, and from the delicacy of his constitution there were the greatest fears for his safety.

Neither this alarming illness nor the Duke's entreaties could move this worthless woman. The Duchess too, on the following day, endeavoured to try the force of her influence.

"Consider, Lady Mary," said her Grace, "your conduct will kill your father; surely

ſurely you cannot be ſerious in your intentions of leaving the protection of all your family and friends! Conſider, is the health, nay, the life of a parent of ſuch little moment? Do, as you regard him, as you value the life of your grandfather and me, reflect ere you take this ill-adviſed ſtep."

"My father," Lady Mary ſternly replied, "had not thoſe feelings for me you ſo ſtrongly recommend to be ſhewn on my part; neither my Lord Duke or your Grace evinced that compaſſion my ſituation demanded: but, newly riſen from a ſtate of extreme danger, the barbarous treatment of this family, which I no longer conſider as mine, had nearly reduced me again to the ſame condition.—No, Madam," ſhe continued, "I leave this houſe never to enter it more; my father has other children to conſole him for the loſs of me, whom he has treated with the moſt unfeeling inhumanity."

She arose, rang the bell, enquired if her carriage was in waiting, and without deigning to take leave of any of the family, she proudly walked to it.

When Lord Seal and Lady Ann found she had actually departed, words cannot describe their grief, their consternation; and many days elapsed ere they became at all reconciled to the misfortune. The Duke, however, thought it necessary to make one more effort to recal her to her duty; he set off for London, and waited on Mrs. Marchmont, to whose house she had directed any person who had business with her. This lady was one of the last people the Devon family would have made choice of as the protectress of any branch of it. Her principles seemed, to the last degree, objectionable; her conduct, to say the best of it, was not without censure, even in the very fashionable world; her house, though visited by some few people of character, entertained numbers of the most dubious description.

She

She had a very large fortune, and that ſort of vivacity ſo captivating to a certain ſet of people.

From this connection the moſt alarming fears for the ſafety of this graceleſs woman, and the honour of the family, took poſſeſſion of the inhabitants of the Abbey. On the return of the Duke, who repreſented things as they really were, the diſappointment of his embaſſy added infinitely to the pain they felt; for their hopes were kept alive by the expectations they formed of the ſucceſs of his entreaties:—now all hope was fled, and they gave up every idea of her return.

The fortune, left by Lady Seal to her two daughters, was twenty thouſand pounds to each, which was to be paid them on their attaining the age of twenty-four; for though it left them in ſome degree independent of Lord Seal, yet his vaſt fortune ſtill kept them much in his power, ſo that poor

poor Lady Seal conceived no other danger could accrue from her bequeſt to her beloved daughters, than adding ſtill to their fortunes; and by leaving it ſolely in their own power, ſhe pleaſed herſelf with the idea of its impreſſing their minds with a tenderneſs for a loſt parent. Her health being for many years extremely delicate, and her conſtantly removing from one place to another in ſearch of a mitigation of the bodily diſeaſe ſhe laboured under, induced her to place her daughters at a French Convent, by which means their real diſpoſitions were never known to her—particularly Lady Mary's, whoſe art completely kept her mother in the dark; ſhe moſt dexterouſly concealed every bad propenſity from her obſervation when ſhe was with her, which, from the above circumſtance, was but ſeldom. She very early learned Lady Seal had much in her power; ſhe therefore as early began the practice of deceit, in the hope of being conſidered by a dying mother as her ſole heireſs:

as

as Lady Seal, for many years before she died, was so extremely unhealthy, each year was expected to be her last.—Thus the fond mother became the dupe of the artifice of her child, for had she known the real character and principles of Lady Mary, the impropriety of thus making her mistress of herself and twenty thousand pounds at the age of twenty-four, would have struck her as a most dangerous and destructive circumstance; but partial to her children, and her will being approved of by her worthy Lord, Lady Seal arranged the matter according to her own noble and generous sentiments, not duly weighing the point. The event, however, proved in one instance the danger of leaving a child in such independence of a good father; for without this fortune we should find Lady Mary under the protection of those amiable relatives, who would have sheltered her from those storms of misery and adversity she was so industriously raising for her own destruction.

After

After the Duke's unſucceſsful attempt, the Duchess wrote many letters with energy and feeling, repreſenting the danger ſhe was in; but Lady Mary's anſwers were ſuch as obliged her Grace to deſiſt. All that could be done was tried; the Duke engaged his friend Mr. H—— to watch over her, and inform him conſtantly of the manner of life ſhe led.

Hitherto the accounts proved extremely unſatisfactory.—The character of Mr. Temple is univerſally known. This gentleman, ſo famous in the annals of gallantry, was Lady Mary's conſtant attendant; all the fears of her family were alive to the danger ſhe was in, yet nothing could be done to ſave her. Lord Seal ſent a friend of his, a female relative, to make terms with her. He offered to ſettle, on her return to him, twenty thouſand pounds more on her, provided ſhe married to pleaſe him, and to allow her the intereſt of it from the day ſhe again became one of his family; but that if ſhe perſiſted to remain

remain from under his protection, he ſhould not think himſelf bound to give her one ſhilling.

All this had no effect; ſhe ſeemed totally devoted to the life moſt ſuited to her, with her friend Mrs. Marchmont; nothing had power to draw her off, and ſhe abſolutely refuſed the proffered reward. Early indulgence unuſed her to controul; unaccuſtomed to ſubdue her ungovernable paſſions, they hurried her away with an impetuoſity that was ſurpriſing.

The effect that the failure of thoſe repeated efforts to withdraw this obſtinate and ungracious woman from the imminent danger ſhe was in, had on Lord Seal and the gentle Lady Ann was truly grievous; and the Duke and Ducheſs mourned the ravages this brought on two people, whoſe amiable characters and gentle manners bound them together by the moſt affectionate ties. They endeavoured to draw Lord

Seal's

Seal's attention to his ſon, whoſe conduct on this diſagreeable affair had been ſuch as to raiſe him highly in the eſteem of all thinking minds.

## CHAP. IX.

THE time now drew near when all neceſſary arrangements of ſettlements and lawyers were expected to be concluded, and the day was fixed upon that was to make Lady Middleton and Mr. Beaumont one. Mrs. Markham arranged every matter in point of ceremonials—all was to be private: and, to fill up a time that is in general awkward, Lady Middleton propoſed an excurſion into Yorkſhire, to ſhew Mademoiſelle

moiſelle M—— her eſtate, on which the Chevalier ſaid there was a very elegant manſion, that the furniture was highly valuable in paintings and books, that every thing was juſt as it was at the decaſe of Mademoiſelle's late uncle, Mr Fairfax, which, by the will of Mrs. Fairfax, became the property of Mademoiſelle.

Lady Middleton's agent was ordered to go before, and take an exact ſurvey of the property and its ſtate, ſo that when Mademoiſelle M—— ſhould be authorized, under the articles of the will, to take poſſeſſion, ſhe might be acquainted with the circumſtances of it.

The party conſiſted of Lady Middleton, Mrs. Markham, Mademoiſelle M——, Lady Matilda, and one of the Miſs Wilmots; Lady Sandford begged to remain with Mr. and Mrs. Selwin. The gentlemen were Mr. Beaumont, the Marquis, Lord Melville, and Mr. Henry. They ſet off from Ankerwick

Ankerwick Caſtle the laſt week in September; and very fine weather contributed ſo much to the other pleaſures of the journey, that everything worth ſeeing that lay at all contiguous to their route, they ſtopped to view.

They arrived at Oakley Park, the name of the eſtate devolved to Mademoiſelle M——. The ſituation of this place was elegant beyond all compariſon; though there were neither grandeur nor magnificence to ſurpriſe, there was that which rivets the attention—a happy harmony in the proportions, which never fails to pleaſe; an elegant ſimplicity of taſte ſhone conſpicuous in all its parts, which charmed the eye, and left a pleaſing idea on the mind of the refined elegance of the departed owners. Every thing within juſtified the ideas raiſed by the architecture without; there was a grace and ſymmetry in all the apartments, of which the ornaments and furniture partook in an uncommon degree.

Mr.

Mr. Fairfax had been a man of letters, and of a ſpeculative turn; he had ſpent fifteen years abroad, and had travelled over India and America; his ſearches after knowledge led him to every part of the world where he could hope to find any thing new, and the different collections he had made juſtified his genius. A vaſt and valuable collection of foſſils and natural curioſities ſhews that he had taken the means neceſſary for ſelf-inſtruction—ſtudy and experiment.

A ſmall cabinet contained a very choice collection of antiques, which engaged Lady Middleton for one whole day; the conſervatory, and a ſmall botanical garden took up another. In the ſylva ſhe found many plants ſhe had never before ſeen, and appeared ſo highly gratified, that Mademoiſelle M—— was the happieſt being in the world—joy animated every feature; ſhe gave more attention and time to thoſe things Lady Middleton prized than ſhe had ever done to any thing before, and her delight

was

was expreſſed in the ſame innocent extravagance as we have found her ſhew on all occaſions when real happineſs aſſailed her.

The penetrating eye of Lady Middleton, when it was too late, ſaw the inward motive, which was no other than a determination inſtantly formed of removing every thing ſo admired, the moment they were her's, from Oakley Park to Ankerwick Caſtle. Moſt of the party ſaw it in a different light; ſhe appeared to them delighted juſt as a child would be by a number of playthings, which a few days would wear off the novelty of, and then would be no more thought of. She would talk of the beauty of every thing, and her obligations; and then pathetically let fall a tear at the idea of the proprietors being no more. She was inquiſitive to the minuteſt circumſtance concerning them; and when an old faithful domeſtic, who had attended Mr. Fairfax in all his wanderings, became the panegyriſt of his dear maſter's virtues, the flood of ſenſibility would

would overflow her eyes till each caught the infection, and the whole party would move off impreſſed with the force of that language that comes directly from the heart.

Oh Nature! how pure, how delicate, how lovely are thy works! In the form and mind of Mademoiſelle M—— thou art ſeen in true character!

The ſcenes of Oakley Park were chiefly of the ſylvan kind; the ſimply elegant ſtructure juſt deſcribed, placed on a gentle riſe, took in a great variety of hill and dale; a winding river diſcovers now and then its mazy courſe, now half concealed, then opening to the view, and winding through a woody vale, you loſe it in a hilly diſtance. The richeſt verdure, and that great appendage to landſcape beauty, the Engliſh oak, here flouriſhed in perfection; and the peculiar feature of this ſweetly paſtoral ſcene was, no intruſion of art was traced in any of its decorations, no aim at changing the character

of the grounds;—Nature was followed; ſhe was the model on which Mr. Fairfax worked, and ſhe has rewarded his labours by ſhewing to the admiring world a ſpecimen of genuine taſte. There is no incoherency; one ſcene is in uniſon with the other; the houſe, of which he was the architect, was conſidered faultleſs; there was an appropriation of the parts to the conveniences wanted; an union of elegance with uſe fitted it peculiarly for the reſidence of talent and content, and this ſeemed the wiſe proprietor's aim; every thing ſuited the eſtate he poſſeſſed.

"Ah," ſaid Lord Loveſdale to Lady Middleton, "what a loſs that Oakley Park is not in the neighbourhood of Ankerwick Caſtle!"

"Ought I to regret it now," ſhe replied, "that this great man is no more? I am rather pleaſed that I never knew him; I look over theſe charming ſcenes, his works, and ſigh to think of our tranſitory ſtate: not with unphiloſophical weakneſs to regret our

our periſhable condition, but to lament that of all ſublunary things we are the moſt liable to decay. Here were wit, talent, and piety joined, and at the early age of forty-three he was cut off,—torn from domeſtic joys, from the boſom of a beloved, tender, and faithful wife."

The picture was genuine; it accorded with the Marquis's feelings; a tear trembled on his eyelid; he turned from the idol of his heart to hide it.

"Yes," continued Lady Middleton, "the woods, the groves, the lowly ſhrubs, the beauteous plants collected from different parts of the globe, here remain; they ſhoot, they grow with vigour, nouriſhed in the ſoil that once was bleſſed to call this man of real taſte its Lord.—What an admirable ſtudy for the human heart is here!"

The accounts Lady Middleton had received of Mr. Fairfax's beneficence from

her agent, who had been among the tenantry, gave her the higheſt idea of him. He let the eſtate, when he came of age, for half its value; he received the propoſals of all his old tenants, ſignifying to them that, though he was a very young man, he was not unacquainted with the rent he ought to be offered; at the ſame time it was his wiſh that every man ſhould take care that a deſire of living on the farm that was enjoyed by his anceſtors ſhould not induce him to offer more than he could pay with eaſe, and grow rich upon.

They were charmed with ſuch generous conſiderations, and gave in their offers, which, upon caſting up, he found his eſtate, inſtead of two thouſand, was raiſed to four thouſand per annum. He told them they had offered well, and aſked if they would not raiſe a little. They replied they had bid the value.

"Well, my friends," ſaid he, "I conſent; I find

I find I am a richer man than I thought I was; let me have all your old leaſes; you ſhall have new ones according to your wiſhes." And they departed in high ſpirits.

Mr. Fairfax had the leaſes drawn at the old rents, and when they came to ſign—"Here," ſaid he, "my father lived on two thouſand a year, and I don't ſee why I ſhould not do the ſame;—here are your new leaſes drawn from the old; enjoy your farms at the ſame rate you have always paid, and remember you are to conſider me a friend to every good man among you."

Here was an early promiſe of future worth; and the character he has left behind ſhews that he improved in virtue as he increaſed in years.

Filled with admiration and delight, they left Oakley Park, and the fourteenth day from that of their departure they arrived at Ankerwick Caſtle, after an excurſion

highly productive of pleasure and improvement; and Lady Middleton had the happiest presentiment that Mademoiselle M—— would not be thought unworthy of being the representative of this amiable man; there was nothing wanting, within the ability of care and attention, to lead a genius and disposition so fruitful in the right way;

——" To rear the tender thought,
" To teach the young idea how to shoot,
" To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind."

Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Henry set off for the Abbey the day after their arrival; and the twenty-sixth of October being the day fixed on for the marriage, which was to be private, as was before observed, the Devon family and Mr. and Mrs. Middleton, with the young Charles, their son, were the only addition to the party, except Mr. Wilmot, who almost lived at Ankerwick Castle.

Lord Seal signified to Lady Middleton his

his intention of being with her to breakfaſt; and, as he ſhould bring Lord Sandford, begged that ſhe and Mr. Beaumont alone ſhould be preſent at the meeting between his ſon and Lady Sandford.

Breakfaſt was accordingly ordered in the coffee-room for five, and Lady Middleton, with Lady Sandford, at a little paſt ten repaired thither.

With a beating heart poor Lady Sandford, in all her native grace and beauty, waited the long expected meeting with a ſhare of timidity not to be deſcribed. Strengthened and ſupported by the wiſe counſels of Lady Middleton, ſhe became more calm by the time they arrived; and yet when the door opened, and they were announced, ſhe ſunk on a couch, her limbs refuſed the neceſſary ſupport to her body, and ſhe nearly fainted.

Lady Middleton addreſſed Lord Sandford

with ſuch a degree of relative familiarity and affection as at once relieved him from the greateſt degree of embarraſſment; and leading him to Lady Sandford—" Here, my charming friend, is my repentant couſin; look upon him with the eye of tender forgiveneſs—never reflect on the paſt."

" And here, my ſon," ſaid Lord Seal, " I give you a woman who confers the greateſt honour on you and your family.—Oh may you make her as happy as ſhe deſerves!"

Lord Sandford took her hand; he ſtood ſilently gazing on her face. She ſaid not a word; they both looked at each other; the big tear trembled in both their eyes; he turned, at length, to Lady Middleton, then to his father, and holding ſtill the hand of Lady Sandford—" Does ſhe forgive her Sandford," ſaid he, throwing himſelf at her feet, " ſuch long, ſuch cruel neglect?"

He

He put his head on her knees, and tears rolled faſt down the cheeks of both; he then graſped both her hands, and preſſing them a thouſand times with fervour to his lips—" Pronounce my pardon," ſaid he, " or I riſe no more!"

" Then riſe this moment," ſaid ſhe; " you are fully pardoned."

" Bleſſed be theſe dear lips that have brought ſuch ſweet conſolation to me! Ah, my love! thy Sandford is now returning with humility to virtue, and feels eternal regret that he ever forſook it! Conſcious of my errors, I look with pleaſure on the time I ſhall be conſidered as worthy of that forgiveneſs I can hardly at preſent expect."

" Sandford!" ſaid ſhe.

The name died away as ſhe uttered it; her head ſunk on his boſom, and, though ſhe did not faint, the ſcene was too much for her; ſhe remained ſome time totally unable to move or ſpeak. When ſhe recovered, a joyful reconciliation took

place juſt as Mr. Beaumont entered the room.

The meeting between him and Lord Sandford was, as it ſhould be, mutually cordial and ſincere. The ſecret of Mademoiſelle M——, if the reader recollects, had been confined to the family, including Lord Loveſdale:—Lady Sandford was kept in total ignorance; through delicacy towards her it was thought moſt expedient that they ſhould appear perfect ſtrangers to each other. Both Mademoiſelle M—— and Lord Sandford were prepared accordingly; and when he was formally introduced to her, with the reſt of the company that were unknown to him, there was a backward timidity in his manner that ſhewed his feelings; and as ſhe looked upon him modeſty coloured her cheek, but conſcious innocence ſoon removed the agitation, and all was again as it ſhould be in a mind that knew no ill."

Billiards

Billiards and tennis amuſed the gentlemen till dinner. Lady Middleton retired, and remained the whole of the morning alone. About five o'clock ſhe and Lady Sandford, Mrs. Markham, and Mademoiſelle M—— entered the drawing-room. Lady Middleton was dreſſed in white; pure and ſpotleſs was the garb of this enchanting woman—perfectly a type of her angelic mind; her air was grave though cheerful; her manner impreſſed the idea of reflection; ſhe ſeemed to have ſtudied the awful ſtate ſhe was entering into; and the ſolemnity that had taken poſſeſſion of her ſoul was gently vaniſhing by degrees, from the hope of future happineſs. The admiration ſhe excited in every breaſt, as ſhe entered, was increaſed through the day by the delicacy and juſtneſs of every look, every word. She had the power of leading the converſation without appearing to do ſo, and imperceptibly directed the thoughts of the whole party on topics that engaged their attention, and by her

uncommon powers cauſed the day to be paſſed without either that dulneſs that tires, or the hilarity that offends. If the love, admiration, and reſpect ſhe had ever inſpired could have increaſed, her manner this day ſerved to do ſo; for ſhe mingled reſerve and gaiety, dignity and familiarity, with ſuch a nicety of diſtinction, that it was a dubious point whether ſhe charmed moſt by beauty or refinement of underſtanding.

Lady Sandford was an object very worthy of general admiration. We have before ſpoken of her great attractions; ſhe was not, as yet, quite nineteen, and her manner was marked with ſuch ſuavity, and her countenance with ſuch ſweet ſenſibility, as formed a character ſo intereſting it was impoſſible to know, and not regard; ſhe poſſeſſed, beſides, all the poliſh of education, and all the natural attendants on high birth.

The ceremony was performed in the chapel,

chapel, which was illuminated moſt ſuperbly; and the next day the whole party ſet off for the Abbey of Devon, where they remained three days, and then adjourned to Waltham Caſtle.

This caſtle ſtands boldly on a hill, and was built for defence: in Cromwell's time it withſtood many attacks, and its preſent ſtrength ſeems to ſet time at defiance. The Waltham eſtate is ſomething better than twelve thouſand pounds per annum; the grounds are indebted to Nature for beauty and verdure, but the woods are poor, and the whole face of the country without any object to engage the attention; and when you ſay it abounded with game, and vaſt flocks and herds of cattle, you muſt finiſh the deſcription. The great-grandfather of Lady Middleton made great improvements in the houſe, which occupies the middle of the building, and forms the habitable part of the caſtle; the two great towers were by him cleared within, and are only outward ornaments

ornaments to the centre of the building, which reduced the vaſtneſs of it to convenience, without taking from the external appearance any of its magnitude; the great gateway and vaſt court remain, as belonging to the character of this ancient ſtructure, but is made cheerful by neatneſs, without receiving the leaſt touch from the hand of modern taſte to deform the original intention of it; the apartments in the houſe are grand, light, and convenient, and from the dreary look of the country for many miles you are at once ſtruck with the ſheltered caſtle, that invites you to hoſpitable comforts and brilliant magnificence. The gravel walks ſeem peculiarly adapted to the ſeaſon of the year that John Earl of Middleton reſided here, for the benefit of country ſports; for after the moſt ſevere rain, you may walk or ride for many miles as dry as if you never quitted a boarded floor; the ſtony gravel they are formed with partakes of the copper ore ſo uncongenial to vegetation, that without either expence or trouble they

they always preſerve a look of neatneſs and comfort, ſo much enjoyed by the pedeſtrian, and alſo the equeſtrian. In point of neighbourhood, a few ſporting lodges were all it could boaſt.

The party now aſſembled wanted no addition;—it conſiſted of twenty-two; all but Lord Seal and the Marquis were happy, and they appeared ſo. The evident change in Lord Sandford gave the moſt inexpreſſible pleaſure to all the family; every body was aſtoniſhed to find the man who all thought fooliſh, illiterate, and ſelf-ſufficient, was well-informed, witty, and agreeable; and Lady Middleton, who wondered at the poſſibility of any woman of ſenſe liking him, but particularly a woman of ſuch refinement as Lady Sandford, was ſurpriſed to find that every day gradually leſſened her unfavourable opinion of him, and before they were three weeks inhabitants of the ſame manſion, her ſentiments were entirely changed: all that unmeaning gallantry, and affectation

affectation of foreign manners—all that diſlike to his native country and its inhabitants—all that ſuperiority which he ſeemed to think he poſſeſſed beyond all others, wore off; his appearance and manners were quite different, and his perſon received as much benefit as his mind from the change; his deportment was cheerful but not gay; there was a latent uneaſineſs that gave him value in the eyes of all; he did not ſlippantly throw off all retroſpection to paſt ſcenes, ſo productive of miſery to him; his manner impreſſed the idea that they were freſh in his memory; his conduct to Lady Sandford was what it ſhould be; he appeared to feel the injuries ſhe received from him, which he wiſhed to obliterate by love and tender reſpect; and his friends ſeemed to think that there was not a doubt of his doing juſtice to her uncommon merit. He wrote a letter to Mademoiſelle M——, expreſſive of his deep ſorrow for his injurious conduct, and of his ſupreme ſatisfaction that his ſchemes againſt her had proved abortive; entreated

her

her pardon, her full forgiveneſs; thanked her for the delicacy ſhe obſerved to Lady Sandford, of whom he ſpoke in high panegyric, and that he would ſolicit her friendſhip as the greateſt honour, when he was aſſured of her entire forgetfulneſs of the paſt.

This letter, which did him great honour, he gave Lady Middleton open, the day after his marriage, telling her at the ſame time, he took the liberty of making her the meſſenger, as Mademoiſelle M—— was under her protection.

" You," ſaid he, " who ſaved her from diſtreſs, and ſheltered her from misfortune —who reconciled her to her family, and are now training her young heart after your own, ought to know all her ſecrets; ſhe ſhould receive no letters unknown to her beſt friend."

Thus we find the moſt diſſipated men become

become the moſt cautious in female education; maſters of intrigue, they beſt know the means of preventing it. He, therefore, behaved to Mademoiſelle M—— with all that propriety and diſtance that he conceived the nature of the circumſtances required: in ſhort, he gave entire ſatisfaction to all.

## CHAP. X.

MR. Wentworth joined the party a few days after they arrived at Waltham, and a valuable acquiſition they found him. He was charmed with Lady Sandford, but Miſs Wilmot ſeemed to fix him; ſhe appeared to be no leſs ſtruck with him, and this was evidently

evidently love at firſt ſight. They were characters extremely ſimilar; eccentricity is generally rapid in deciſion, and eccentricity belonged to both.

Mr. Wilmot was a native of America—a man of ſound ſenſe and foreſight; and at the beginning of the jealouſy with the mother-country, he conſidered America would be for a long time a very diſturbed country, if no other evil were to be dreaded. He was in a very delicate ſtate of health, which totally unfitted him for taking an active part, if his principles led him to it; but he was a Royaliſt, and to take the field againſt his relations and friends he found impoſſible;—he, therefore, at a very early period of the diſſenſions, came to the reſolution of ſelling all his property, and quitting it.

He arrived ſafe in England, with all his treaſures, four children, two ſons, and as many daughters, all of very tender age; he had buried

buried a much lamented wife the year before. He ſettled in London, where he remained for five years, and gave up the whole of his time to his children; and he purchaſed an eſtate, on which he built a houſe, within ten miles of Ankerwick Caſtle, where he lately came to reſide.

They were juſtly eſteemed a very agreeable family; and the Miſs Wilmots were what may properly be called people of talent. They have been already mentioned as poſſeſſing theatrical and muſical abilities; they both had ready wit and great animation, which the Americans are remarkable for; their perſons were above the middle ſtature, with beautiful and regular features, and that ſort of light brown complexions which, when accompanied with fine black eyes, never fail of being extremely agreeable. Miſs Wilmot had rather the advantage of her ſiſter, who was three years younger, and to whom ſhe was a mother as well as ſiſter; her converſation

was

was delicate, and ſtriking when diſpoſed to raillery, and her imagination was ſubject to flights that made her ſociety very entertaining and much ſought for; ſhe poſſeſſed a fund of pleaſantry, but ſo guarded by propriety, that as ſhe amuſed, ſhe alſo gained eſteem. Fortune ſeemed to have taken her under her particular protection in offering ſuch a man as Mr. Wentworth; her perſonal charms ſtruck him, and her brilliant mind ſecured the conqueſt.

Mr. Wilmot ſaw the attachment with ſincere delight; he adored his daughter, and could not wiſh more than an union with Mr. Wentworth, with whom every thing was to be found to enſure rational happineſs. He intended to give his daughters fortunes equal to his ſons, as he thought men might add to their poſſeſſions by chuſing profeſſions ſuited to their genius. —" But women," he would ſay, " are from nature helpleſs; they, therefore, require even

even more; and were my property leſs," he would ſay, "I ſhould deduct from my ſons, and give a genteel ſupport to my helpleſs daughters, that if they ſhould never marry, either from neceſſity or inclination, they might live as became their ſtation; and if my ſons liked me the leſs for this diſtribution, it would not raiſe them in my eſteem or opinion.—But if they do marry, a good fortune entitles them to a good ſettlement; and there again the advantages are great; for it is pitiable to ſee a woman, who has lived in ſplendour, by the death of a beloved huſband precipitated at once into widowhood and penury, neglected and deſpiſed by thoſe who but a little time before feaſted ſumptuouſly at her luxurious and hoſpitable board; that board no longer ſupplied, ſhe ſinks into obſcurity, all her worth and many virtues dwindle away, and ſhe finds herſelf thrown off, except by a few, who either from really having more ſenſibility, or affecting to have it, call on her now and then to ſhew that they pity, they feel for

for her forlorn ſituation, and gratify their love of talk in lamenting her wretchedneſs in half a hundred morning viſits, made totally for that purpoſe. My daughters," he would ſay, " are as dear to me as my ſons; the latter can fight their way in this changeable and uncertain life, but it is the indiſpenſable duty of every parent to look well to the eſtabliſhment of the more tender ſex;—while men can overcome mountains, women are checked by ſtraws."

This good man gave his four children fifteen thouſand pounds each; and his eſtates, purchaſed ſince his arrival in England, were to be equally divided at his death.

How equitable, how juſt is this reaſoning! how productive of good in ſociety!—How ſad, on the contrary, is it to reflect that pride too generally throws into the lap of the eldeſt ſon, who often proves the leaſt worthy, the principal poſſeſſions of the family, while worth,

worth, virtue, innocence, and talent are left with too ſcanty a ſupport to rank in a line with the proud and haughty heir.

Mr. Wilmot, though an old man, was a moſt agreeable and inſtructive companion. Mr. Wentworth ſeemed a character perfectly congenial to him; they both ſhone by ſetting off each other's excellencies. Lady Matilda's ſpirits ſeemed quite fled, and Miſs Wilmot's to ſucceed her in that gaiety and pleaſantry her Ladyſhip had been ſo remarkable for.

"Do you know, Madam," ſaid ſhe to the Ducheſs of Devon, "that all our circle are in love with the elegant Melville, except Lady Matilda Summers; and I have been this morning calling her taſte very much in queſtion, for undoubtedly he is one of the moſt charming fellows I know;—but here he comes, and Mademoiſelle M—— will join me in taking him to pieces.—Come now, my Lord," turning to Lord Melville, "you

" you muſt ſtand to be criticized by all the connoiſſeurs in beauty; your face and perſon have been productive of the warmeſt diſputes among the female world of Waltham Caſtle, and her Grace of Devon is to ſit in judgment, and decree according to our reports. To begin.—We all agree, except Lady Matilda, that you are exactly the true criterion in ſtature; her Ladyſhip thinks you too tall," looking archly at Lady Matilda; " your fine hair, like Apollo's, ſhadows in luxurious treſſes your fine manly countenance; then your eyes, your noſe, your mouth, your teeth, your chin, we all pronounce matchleſs, except Lady Matilda.—Upon my word your Ladyſhip is very hard to be pleaſed.—Don't you think ſhe is, my Lord?"

She then covered her face with her hand, and hurrying Mademoiſelle M—— out of the room, away they ran, and left Lord Melville ſtanding in the midſt loſt in

amazement, Lady Matilda in the greateſt confuſion, and all the reſt in fits of laughter.

Conſcience makes cowards of us all.—Lady Matilda, though quick at reply, was unable, from ſome cauſe or other, not eaſy to be divined, to ſay one word; when Mr. Henry came into the room, begging to know what could be the matter with Mademoiſelle M—— and Miſs Wilmot, for that he had met them running through the hall with ſuch buſy importance in their looks and manner, he was ſure there was ſomething in agitation.

"I don't know, upon my ſoul," replied Lord Melville, who ſtill occupied the middle of the room.

"Why, what is the matter, my Lord?"

"Pray aſk her Grace of Devon," anſwered his Lordſhip.

"No," ſaid the Ducheſs, "aſk Lady Matilda."

"Nay," ſaid Lady Matilda, getting up, and

and quitting the room in the greateſt confuſion, " I am ſure I know nothing of the matter."

" I believe," ſaid Mr. Henry to the Ducheſs, " I had better go after Miſs Wilmot, and aſk her."

" I fancy that will be the beſt way," ſaid Mrs. Markham.

Lord Melville, as if rouſed by ſome unknown feeling, ſtruck his hand on his forehead, and quitted the room. The Marquis looked at Lady Middleton, in whoſe face he thought he perceived as much ſurpriſe at the ſerious manner Lord Melville took this giddy flight of Miſs Wilmot's; and as he was conſcious of his feelings, his varying cheek ſpoke more eloquently his ſenſations than he wiſhed ſhould be ſeen; and complaining of cold, he ſtirred up the fire, to hide it from the penetrating eye of his charming friend.

Lady Middleton had long thought the

conduct of Lord Melville very extraordinary. It is eaſy to diſcover genuine love; every look, every word ſpeak the heart really attached; it did ſo in every feature of Lord Melville, yet he ſeemed gloomy and uneaſy, penſive, and loſt in thought and care; a latent unhappineſs evidently preyed on him; maſter of his own actions, and a very large fortune, highly eſteemed by the world, and poſſeſſing a mind copiouſly ſtored with knowledge and virtue, there was ſomething wonderfully unaccountable in his frequent fits of deſpondence. He was never a moment from Lady Matilda; and on the inſtant of apparent tranquillity and delight, in converſe with the woman on whom he ſeemed to dote, he would often ſtart from his ſeat, and ſuddenly leave the room, and on his return traces of agitation and miſery were always viſible on his countenance.

Lady Matilda felt all the partiality for him he could deſire, and his ſufferings endeared

endeared him to her; at the ſame time ſhe imbibed a great ſhare of his melancholy.

Fortune is ſometimes jealous of the juſtice done to merit; ſhe ſeemed to repent of the benefits conferred on this her favourite, and mixing ſomething bitter in the cup of his fate, ſhe reſolved to take from him a portion of that happineſs ſhe at firſt gave him every promiſe he ſhould enjoy.

On account of no form being obſerved at Waltham Caſtle, but every body left to the amuſements of their own fancy, the whole party were very rarely collected together, except during meals; and it was at breakfaſt the following morning that they came to a knowledge of the departure of Lord Melville. He had not ſaid a word of his intention to Lady Matilda, and only told Mr. Henry he ſhould take it as the greateſt favour if he would make his excuſe to Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton, and inform them that ſudden and indiſpenſable buſineſs

drew him from a ſociety where alone he could be happy; and preſſing Mr. Henry's hand with the moſt fervent warmth, he ſtepped into his carriage, and departed.

All the company ſeemed aſtoniſhed at his ſudden departure without ſpeaking of his intention. The Marquis bit his lip, but ſoon recovering himſelf—"What could have drove Melville from us?" ſaid he.

"He received letters yeſterday," ſaid Lord Sandford.

"They might have imparted the neceſſity of going ſo abruptly," ſaid Mrs. Markham, "and we ſhall ſoon ſee him again."

Lady Matilda turned pale, and after breakfaſt ſhe retired to her room. She felt no extravagance of anger, but a laſſitude of deſpair diffuſed itſelf over her ſoul; ſhe ſat down, and ſaw from her window the road he muſt have taken.

"He flies me!" ſaid ſhe. "Ah Melville! you

you are unhappy, and can I complain? Some ſad ſecret lies heavy at your heart, and the pleaſing ſcenes in which I have ſuffered my imagination to wander, ſuddenly diſappear as by the power of enchantment, and my ſun of happineſs ſets never more to riſe."

In this temper of mind Lady Middleton found her; and by juſt reaſoning, and the influence of that warm friendſhip that ſubſiſted in ſo ſublime a degree between them, reſtored her to a ſtate of placid calmneſs, which, in her preſent ſituation and uncertainty, was all that could be looked for.

The return of Lord Melville the following week reſtored her entirely; and accounting for the ſuddenneſs of his departure and return, very much to the ſatisfaction of all concerned therein, peace and happineſs again reigned with double ſway in the hearts of thoſe ſo lately depreſſed.

Mr. Wentworth was now obliged to return to town; and after his departure Lord Melville was unmercifully witty on poor Miſs Wilmot. She was not yet, however, ſo very far gone in her paſſion for Mr. Wentworth, as to prevent her retorting with much pleaſantry on his Lordſhip, the ſtate of whoſe ſpirits, though the cauſe was unknown, did not permit him to come off at the beſt ſide; he was doubly diſtanced in almoſt every conteſt, ſo that he at length gave it up all together, to the infinite delight of Lady Matilda, who was not able to overcome certain ſenſations that totally prevented her from joining in the raillery, though on all other occaſions ſhe was the firſt in ſuch pleaſantries.

Mr. Williams, with three of his gay companions, all men of very diſſolute principles, arrived at Waltham Caſtle; they were going down to a hunting ſeat of his about thirty miles below the Caſtle, and his coach was overſet a little way from it, by which accident

accident the perch was broke. In this dilemma a council was called to determine on the beſt plan to be adopted. The weather was very ſevere; a great quantity of ſnow, that had fallen the preceding evening, made it impoſſible to walk; riding on horſeback was ſtill more unpleaſant and dangerous—beſides, they had only the coach-horſes and one nag, which the footman rode; it was ſeven miles to the next ſtage, and evening was cloſing in faſt. Mr. Williams propoſed going to Waltham Caſtle;—it was not what he would have exactly wiſhed; he did not, beſides, think himſelf ſufficiently intimate with Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton, to take three gentlemen who were utter ſtrangers to them; he thought it a very awkward buſineſs, but knew not what elſe to do to relieve them.

"That blockhead Melville is there, to be ſure," ſaid he, "whining his heart out for that proud, affected, taſteleſs Lady Matilda Summers; we ſhall die, Temple, of

vapours, and ſhall ſtarve after our fatigues — Two bottles each, after this curſed cold ride, would be too little for us; and amongſt all the ſanctified ſet we ſhall not get as many glaſſes.—I hate to drink when it is not the faſhion of the houſe; and a parcel of boarding-ſchool Miſſes would drink as much as all the men now at the Caſtle.—Sandford himſelf never loved the bottle, though he is a damned fellow at moſt of the other luxuries of life.—What in nature could poſſeſs him to ſhackle himſelf with a wife?"

"Come, come," ſaid Mr. Temple, "determine quickly, my good fellow, for damn me if it would not be almoſt as well to be married ourſelves as to continue in this cold place another half hour.—I would change my coachmaker, Williams, or my coachman, for, damn me, your carriages are always breaking down;—you never buy a new one."

"Not often," ſaid Mr. Williams, drily, who did not much reliſh the idea of taking

any of his three friends into the circle of Waltham Caſtle, but it was unavoidable; and, therefore, very much out of humour at the accident, and ſtill more ſo at the neceſſity of intruding on Mr. Beaumont and Lady Middleton, they marched one after the other in doleful dumps, and reached Waltham Caſtle juſt as the whole family were aſſembled in the drawing-room previous to dinner.

Mr. Beaumont and Lord Melville went out of the room the moment they were informed of the accident that cauſed their arrival; and a very polite reception, and cordial invitation to feel themſelves quite at home, reconciled theſe gentlemen a little to the dull hours they were forced to ſpend in a circle ſo very different from that they expected to have enjoyed that night at Frederic Lodge. They begged leave to change their dreſs, as the ſnow had penetrated quite through their boots. They were immediately ſhewn to a room for that

purpoſe; and when Mr. Beaumont mentioned the names of the gentlemen, at that of Temple poor Lord Seal and Lady Ann turned quite pale, and Lady Middleton thought the accident a very croſs one indeed, that obliged ſuch men to take refuge from the ſeverity of the weather in their ſociety; however, it was unavoidable, and politeneſs made it abſolutely neceſſary to aſk them to prolong their ſtay.

They had ordered two poſt-carriages from the next ſtage, to be at Waltham Caſtle at twelve o'clock the next day; but the great fall of ſnow made it impoſſible for a carriage to run. Beſides, there was but one at home—the other had gone out the day before, and could not return; and it was not until the fifth day that they were enabled to ſet off on foot, by a hard froſt coming on, which bound the ſnow, and made it good walking: but a bright ſun and clear ſky promiſed fair for making their walk to Frederic Lodge, which was thirty

thirty miles, a very pleaſant one; ſo that they propoſed getting there the ſecond day.

Their departure was a very great relief to the whole party, but particularly to Lady Sandford and Mademoiſelle M——.

Mr. Williams at laſt found himſelf in exactly the ſame predicament as his friend Lord Melville;—conſcious of the charms of beauty, and paſſionately in love with Lady Sandford, her being married was a circumſtance of too little moment to beſtow a thought on, and he gave himſelf up to as violent a paſſion as if it was ſanctioned by propriety and honour.

Temple, ever wary, and deep in his ſchemes, kept his ſentiments to himſelf; and before he left Waltham Caſtle, he determined on the deſtruction of Mademoiſelle M——, whoſe candour, vivacity, and innocence induced him to think her a very eaſy prey. He had contrived to make very

very great advances during his ſhort ſtay, which ſhe was too happy and too gay to take any notice of, except by laughing at them, and that over, they never recurred to her memory; nor did the ſlighteſt thought of the four gentlemen, from the moment ſhe ſaw them no more, until ſhe met them again in London, ever intrude after her telling Lady Middleton the day of their departure. She was delighted they were gone, for they were by far the moſt diſagreeable men ſhe had ever ſeen.

"They are not ſuited, Mademoiſelle, either to your fancy or mine," ſaid Lady Middleton; "they are not juſt the ſort of men I ſhould wiſh for the acquaintance of my charming young friend; and I think it very unfortunate they have been preſented to you, as hereafter you cannot forbid their knowledge of you, though it may be productive of many diſadvantages in the eye of the world: for Mr. Temple is one of the moſt diſſipated and vicious libertines of the age."

"He

"He is every thing that is abominable, I believe," replied Mademoiſelle M——. "Lord Melville tells me he is thought very handſome, but to me he is frightful; there is ſomething ſo bold in his look, and ſo free in his manner, he quite diſguſts me—ſo very unlike all the reſt of the men of my acquaintance."

Mr. Beaumont was pleaſed that Mr. Williams, the friend of Lord Melville, (though that he was his friend, all who knew his Lordſhip were ſurpriſed at), and the other gentlemen ſhould have arrived; as the inclemency of the ſeaſon, it being now the beginning of December, deprived them of all enjoyment from without, and he hoped that variety, though nothing could be well expected from their addition to the party, would have a good effect on the ſpirits of Lord Melville and the Marquis. They were men of the freeſt ſentiments and manners; and though Lady Middleton diſliked them exceedingly, ſhe was one of

thoſe

thoſe few who did not think wealth and rank ſuperſede the neceſſity of affability and politeneſs, and a ſeeming wiſh to pleaſe even thoſe who are not agreeable to us.

The four gentlemen had been provided with poles with iron ſpikes fixed in the end; and as they journied on, the thoughts of two of the four were very differently occupied:—Williams was loſt in admiration of Lady Sandford; he was at laſt caught in a ſerious attachment; he envied Sandford, and no longer wondered at his becoming a Benedict; he was fated to envy him ſtill more, for his hopes were blaſted in the bud; he feared her too virtuous, too prudent to ſuffer his aſſiduities, and he deſpaired of touching her heart. He reſolved, however, to go to London immediately, get his houſe in Piccadilly new furniſhed, and endeavour, by giving ſplendid balls, &c. &c. and being conſtantly of their parties, through Lord Melville, to leave nothing undone to ſoften her.

" Oh

"Oh ye Gods!" he would say, "a trip to the Continent with such a charming companion — yes, that would be worth living for!"

Mr. Temple had many affairs on his hands;—Lady Mary Berkley was his last favourite—Mademoiselle M—— was his present; and while Mr. Williams was new-furnishing his house, laying out in his mind's eye the most elegant entertainments, with all of fashion about him, to entangle the affections of the amiable Lady Sandford, Mr. Temple had settled a plan of seduction he never knew to have failed him, and longed for the period that should ensure him what he considered a very easy matter to accomplish. He dreaded Lady Middleton—virtue and vice never assimilate; but he comforted himself with the idea of the assistant he should have in Lady Mary Berkley.

The other two gentlemen added more to the pleasure of the eye than the understanding;

ſtanding; they were conſtant companions of Mr. Williams, becauſe he did not like to live alone;—but they were inſipid characters, who ſerved to drink his wine, applaud his wit, and join in his ſports. Theſe were the only advantages that could be derived from their ſociety; and as he found it a very difficult matter to have his houſe filled when he was at home with men exactly ſuited to his taſte, he ſatisfied himſelf with Mr. F—— and Mr. R——, and required no more of them than they were capable of beſtowing.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XI.

THE pedeſtrians arrived at Frederic Lodge with little zeſt for the amuſements that were in waiting for them; and the following week they ſet off for London, Mr. Williams having put off ſome gentlemen who had engaged themſelves to hunt with him, on pretence of unexpected buſineſs;—buſineſs indeed he had, but of his own making. The fancy is ever leading us aſtray; better had they followed the chace at Frederic Lodge, than purſued the wild-gooſe one they were leading themſelves into, as will appear hereafter.

Mr. Temple thought every day a century until

until he saw Lady Mary, to learn the character of Mademoiselle M——; and Mr. Williams thought time dragged heavily on until he got his fine house in town new modelled, to which he invited his sister, a widow, who had been his favourite, and really such a woman, whose brilliancy of wit, joined to the strictest propriety of manner, would draw together to his house both the learned and the great; for without her assistance he thought there would be some difficulty in getting the first circle to frequent his galas. He had a fine estate, and large sums in the funds, which had been saved during his minority; he had never played, and he found his fortune more than sufficient to procure him every thing he could desire. Mr. F—— and Mr. R—— did not very much relish this new arrangement; they were not so necessary in London as in the country: but the business was settled according to the feelings of Mr. Williams and Mr. Temple, and that was quite sufficient.

The

The time now drew near for the departure of the family at Waltham Caſtle, and a vaſt crowd of company were preparing to go to the Abbey; all thoſe families around it repaired to their ſeats, in compliment to the Duke and Ducheſs of Devon, for they were highly reſpected and regarded by all ranks of people. Every thing to be deſired from mirth, feſtivity, and a conſtant ſucceſſion of company was in embryo at the Abbey; and all the Waltham Caſtle party fixed the day for their removal there. Mr. Beaumont would have deferred it to a later period of the winter, but that it was abſolutely neceſſary that they ſhould appear at Court on the birth-day.

"My darling Gertrude," ſaid he, "we are leaving this peaceful, quiet ſcene. How much more ſuited to real happineſs than the buſtle we are ſhortly to be engaged in! How much more ſuited to my diſpoſition than a London life!"

"Shall we make it a rule," ſaid ſhe, "to

" to paſs two months in every year here? It would be very agreeable to me."

Mr. Beaumont's whole countenance brightened up; his eyes ſparkled with pleaſure.

" Beſt beloved of my heart," ſaid he, preſſing her to his boſom, " this was a matter I ſhould have mentioned to you before, but I feared I ſhould lay a reſtraint on you."

" You would lay a much greater one," ſhe replied, " by wiſhing the ſame time ſpent in London."

The Marquis tapped at the door, and entered.

" Here is a ſummons, Lady Middleton, for Henry's departure; his regiment, with ſome others, are under orders for India; I ſuppoſe in leſs than two months they will be off."

" India!"

"India!" said they; "is it possible?"

"Yes, faith!" said the Marquis; "and I have a great mind to go with him."

"No," said Lady Middleton, "you are under an absolute promise of staying with us until May; you surely will not break it?"

"Upon no other occasion would I break through it," said the Marquis. "But this is an unexpected matter; Henry and I had formed a plan that would have taken us a different route; but surely I cannot desert my friend on his first campaign."

"Come," said Mr. Beaumont, "we shall discuss this point in private; at present we will take our ride."

A servant came to inform them the horses were at the door. The air was cold; but a fine clear blue sky, and dry roads, with the addition of great coats and bosom friends, made their ride charming.

Henry was delighted at the idea of going to

to India, but his feeling heart taught him it was a hard leſſon to learn to part with ſuch kind friends; nevertheleſs it was warm with ambition, ſighing to diſtinguiſh himſelf in the grandeur of military exploits. Cool, ſteady, and brave, he longed to "follow to the field that warlike Lord," from whoſe matchleſs valour, integrity, and humanity ſo much was expected — he on whom at this time the eyes of all Europe were fixed, and who afterwards gave peace to India.

The Marquis, finding it indiſpenſably neceſſary to quit the ſociety of Lady Middleton, came to the reſolution of following the only plan likely to remove the dreadful malady that was daily making ſuch depredations on his health and ſtrength, as plainly ſhewed him the abſolute neceſſity of leaving England. He had propoſed to himſelf to travel the following ſpring, but he knew too well that no change of country could be of the ſmalleſt uſe to him if unemployed;

an

an idle life, and Mr. Henry his companion, his thoughts would ever and anon recur to the fond remembrance of Ankerwick Caſtle: he could neither by travel fly himſelf or the idea of Lady Middleton; but as it was better than remaining abſolutely in her preſence, he would go, though he could not promiſe to himſelf any real benefit. On finding, therefore, his friend ordered away to India, he conceived the life of a ſoldier peculiarly fitted to his ſtate of mind—always in cheerful company, the duty of a profeſſion to attend to, the call of glory, all rouſed a ſpirit of emulation and ambition in his breaſt, which gave him pleaſure to feel he was capable of. Reduced as he was by ſickneſs and deſpair, no condition of life appeared to him more cruel than that of being ſeparated from the woman he loved;—the dread of it ſhook his whole frame—he could hope for no ſolace in that forlorn ſtate. How fallacious is that idea, that what admits of no reſt cannot ſubſiſt long! The Marquis lived, but reſt was fled;

often has he wiſhed his ſorrows were at an end, and yet he could not haſten the wiſhed-for period. In the circle of his friends, who were ſenſible of his worth, he indulged his love; they knew the ſources of his melancholy, and kindly forbore with him, but a cenſorious world might view it in a different light;—and this was his great call to India; for this alone he left his country and friends; he had long meditated on becoming an exile, but was now reſolved. He had another cauſe of grief—his father and mother.

"There I ſhall bring ſorrow," he would ſay, as he traverſed his room; "there, where it has ever been my ſtudy to bring peace and joy; yet in this arrangement they will only have my abſence to mourn. If I ſtay here——" and he ſtopped.—"My friend," ſaid he, "my Beaumont muſt break this heavy news to them; we muſt keep it a profound ſecret till every thing is finally ſettled; common report muſt not firſt inform

inform them of the extraordinary reſolution of their only ſon;—in Beaumont my darling ſiſter will find a brother;—if ſhe were married, I think I ſhould leave England with a lighter heart.—Melville's conduct is rather extraordinary; he appears deeply intereſted, nay, I believe paſſionately in love with Matilda, and yet he preſerves a cautious conduct that diſpleaſes me;—is it not ſo, my friend?" addreſſing Mr. Beaumont, who had juſt joined him.

"Let us not judge too haſtily," replied Mr. Beaumont; "I have a very high opinion of Lord Melville;—ſet yourſelf perfectly at reſt on that point; none of us, my good friend, venture to propoſe for a beloved object, until we are pretty certain of ſucceſs: and Lady Matilda has refuſed ſo many, I am not ſurpriſed at his being afraid."

"I think, however," ſaid the Marquis, "it is very evident that Matilda likes Melville."

"She beſt knows," ſaid Mr. Beaumont;

" every thing will be as it ought, take my word for it; and I very ſincerely hope Lady Matilda's ſentiments are ſuch as you ſuſpect; her choice could not fall on more merit."

" And yet," ſaid the Marquis, " though Melville is a very fine fellow, he has ſomething about him at times that does not pleaſe me when I think of him as a huſband for my ſiſter. His heart ſeems not at eaſe; unhappineſs evidently aſſails him, though we cannot find from what ſource it flows; and I ſhall think it abſolutely neceſſary to be accounted for before any connection takes place: and, ſhould my father overlook this, I leave it to you, as my requeſt, that you will probe Melville to the quick on this ſubject."

Mr. Beaumont had obſerved this alſo; but as he ſaw Lord Loveſdale uneaſy about it, and determined to go to India, he made very light of it, and kept his idea, which was exactly the Marquis's, to himſelf.

But

But he was determined to examine into the cauſe very narrowly, and to mention it to the Duke, ſhould any thing ſerious ariſe from Lord Melville's evident partiality for Lady Matilda.

" No man," ſaid Lord Loveſdale, in a tone of agitation, " ſhould dare to think of a woman poſſeſſed of ſuch refinement as Matilda is, while he harbours any idea of another;—that Melville is in ſome *embaras* I am certain; his reveries, his confuſion, all ſpeak it.—Oh yes," ſaid he, with a raiſed voice, " his manner declares his violent attachment to Matilda, and contention with his honour."

" Nay," ſaid Mr. Beaumont, " you carry your fears too far; your penetration may be too quick; it may cauſe you to fancy what does not in reality exiſt."

" I cannot agree with you there," ſaid the Marquis; " I have made Melville my ſtudy from the moment I firſt perceived he was agreeable to my ſiſter. I think I am

not miſtaken, and I truſt to your kind care t inform yourſelf fully on a ſubject, that, ſh uld it exiſt, might lay the foundation of miſery to a being fraught with every virtue; for truſt me, my friend, her mind is the ſeat of purity itſelf. If the heart of Matilda's huſband is fickle and inconſtant, ſhe will fall to an early grave, like a tender plant that is nipped and cut off by a hard and rigorous froſt; no common-place ideas, that actuate half the fine ladies of the age, could reconcile her to an eſtrangement of his love, for Matilda will fondly attach herſelf to the virtue and worth of her huſband: but if ſhe finds him faulty there, ſhe will ſink under her diſappointment to riſe no more. I judge of her, my friend, by myſelf; we are kindred ſouls; the all-powerful charms of Lady Middleton could never have ſubdued me, had ſhe not poſſeſſed thoſe innate noble feelings and ſentiments that ſpeak her every thought and action. With ſuch women, my dear Beaumont, we expect every thing, and cannot be diſappointed; a lovely form

and

and beauteous face are not all the requiſites for matrimonial happineſs; we look for thoſe perfections that muſt enſure our eſteem and good opinion."

Here a gentleman on buſineſs to Mr. Beaumont broke up the *tête-à-tête*; and the Marquis, in a ſtate of mind that needs no comment to the feeling reader, walked into the Park. Here he gave a looſe to his burſting heart; he felt as if the principles of life were exhauſted.

"Oh my ſoul!" ſaid he, "with what dreams of happineſs haſt thou been bewitched! How haſt thou doted, fondly doted, on this moſt excellent woman! With what purity do I adore thee! Yes, Oh yes, I would ſhield thee from the morning blaſt, from the evening dew! Thy innocence, thy honour, are dearer to me than my own! I would lock thee in my heart—my vital breath ſhould be given for thy repoſe! May no rude miſery ever approach thee! May

thy dear Lord be ever what thy fondeſt wiſhes deſire! May thy days glide on in eternal ſunſhine!—Oh!" ſaid he, throwing himſelf againſt a tree, " mayſt thou be all I wiſh thee, and when the vaſt ocean divides us——Ah, there is the blow! I can hardly ſuſtain it! Methinks I would fain have it deferred to a more diſtant period, in the hope of gaining ſtrength by delay; yet, in the hour of trying diſtreſs, of what avail, Oh Philoſophy! are all thy ſentiments, all thy maxims? The conſolation they adminiſter is in general ſo cold and inſenſible, that it makes no impreſſion on the heart, and paſſes over the mind without leaving a ſingle trace behind. All my reaſonings I find ineffectual when I am no longer bleſſed with the ſight of this angel, no longer enjoy her dear ſociety, no more am charmed with the ſound of her voice—then, Oh then all my philoſophical arguments cannot teach me it is no evil! Oh mayſt thou, deareſt of women, think of Loveſdale as the ſoul of honour!—

think

think that though he dotes upon thee to diſtraction, though long thou haſt allowed him to be thy companion, never has the eye of impurity been directed to thee!—No, angelic woman! though my love is fatal to myſelf, a thought of mine ſince I knew that you loved another, has never been ſuch as that angels might not know; and when I quit thee, I could exclaim—"Muſt I then leave thee, Paradiſe!"

Here an agony of tears relieved him a little.

"Oh who can tell the inward woe
"That preſſes on my heart!"

ſaid he, as with ſlow and unſteady ſteps he meaſured back his way to the houſe. He crept ſoftly to his own room; his ſoul was not in uniſon for converſe; he threw himſelf on his bed, and gave a looſe to his feelings.

" Muſt I then leave thee?" ſaid he; " leave thee, and for ever?"

A rap at his door rouſed him from the moſt agonizing tortures.

" It is time to dreſs for dinner, my Lord," ſaid his gentleman. " I have been at your door twice; Lady Middleton is already in the drawing-room."

" Then, prithee, Stanley," ſaid the Marquis, " come a third time, for I am not diſpoſed to open the door at preſent; I ſhall make but little alteration in my dreſs to-day."

Stanley, as he quitted the door, ſighed deeply.

" Ah my dear maſter," ſaid this worthy man, " why do I live to ſee you thus, the pride and honour of Nobility, loſt to yourſelf and the world?"

Mr.

Mr. Beaumont, coming down from his dreſſing-room, croſſed Stanley, who made way for him. Mr. Stanley was a perſon of whom Mr. Beaumont had the higheſt opinion, and, liking the man, he generally ſpoke to him whenever he accidentally met him.

"Where is your Lord, Stanley?" ſaid he.

"In his room, Sir," replied Stanley, with a bow of the greateſt reſpect; "I fear my Lord Marquis is not well; his door is locked, and there is no admittance, though I have informed him dinner will ſoon be ſerved."

"Shall I go and ſee him?" ſaid Mr. Beaumont; "would it be agreeable?"

"I rather fancy not, Sir," anſwered Stanley; "nay, I fear he would not be pleaſed were he to know I have mentioned the circumſtance."

Mr. Beaumont gave an inclination of

the head, which Stanley underſtood to be equal to an aſſurance that no notice ſhould be taken of it, and he moved to the drawing-room.

"How much," ſaid he to himſelf, "will thy worthy, honeſt heart feel at knowing thy loved Lord is going to India!"

His countenance was full of this ſad thought on entering the room, and Lady Middleton inſtantly obſerved it. She looked to know if ſhe could remove whatever was unpleaſant, but Lord Melville coming in with moſt of the family, he affected an eaſe he did not feel; yet in the courſe of dinner, ſeeing the Marquis rather gay, all uneaſineſs was removed.

Mr. Beaumont left nothing undone to exhilarate every heart, in the hope that general good ſpirits would have the wiſhed-for effect on the amiable Marquis.

The

The next day they ſet off for the Abbey of Devon, where they were to remain for five weeks, during which time every thing that was feſtive, elegant, and gay awaited them.

The froſt continuing, induced the gentlemen to ſkate; there were ſome of the party remarkable for their ſkill, among whom were Mr. Beaumont, the Marquis, and Mr. Henry; General Melliſh alſo was capital, and amuſed very much by the lively and entertaining accounts he gave of that exerciſe in Canada; the fine clear blue ſky and bright ſun of this ſeaſon put him much in mind of that country.

"We want nothing but traineaus, manageable dogs, bear-ſkins, and ſome greater degrees of cold, to experience all its pleaſures," ſaid he; "for we poſſeſs all the gaiety and good-humour ſo prevalent in theſe regions, where nothing is thought of but mirth and hoſpitality, and where ſorrow and

and melancholy never intrude to rob the lively, happy inhabitant of any portion of pleaſure. The ſeverity of cold is all they dread; and, like all excellent economiſts and able philoſophers, they lay themſelves out to be as little inconvenienced by it as poſſible, keeping the animal ſpirits afloat by cheerfulneſs and full ſocieties, where each individual's principal ſtudy is to be agreeable, and to contribute as much as is in his power to the pleaſure of the whole, by that exertion of talent which is excited by the rarifying quality of the air without, and the univerſal hilarity within."

Some of the improvements of the Abbey were in the Dutch ſtyle, with ſtraight ponds of great length, planted on each ſide with rows of lofty trees. Thoſe pieces of artificial water are well calculated for ſkaters; but about a mile from the Abbey there was a ſpot which Nature ſeemed to point out as peculiarly adapted to rural improvement, where the genius of a Brown was hardly

hardly neceſſary. The ſimple and fantaſtic forms of riſe and plain; a natural ſtream meandered in beautiful irregularity; a ſhrouding of trees here and there; the banks ſwelling to the right and left, ornamented with the richeſt wood; a few cottages ſcattered, ſcarcely perceptible but by their ſmoke, and the noiſe of the crowing cock. Thus characterized by native ſimplicity, the idea was followed; the ſtream was only enlarged—its courſe not altered; a cottage was erected, from which the improvement took its name, whoſe outward form was ruſtic—within it was elegant; a few walks, judiciouſly cut, finiſhed all that was neceſſary; the ſcene was completed, and nothing wanting of foreground, perſpective, or back ſcenery to make it one of the ſweeteſt, moſt ſequeſtered ſylvan ſcenes imaginable.

To this delightful retreat the Duke propoſed the ladies ſhould go, where he promiſed them a warm room, from which there

was

was a full view of the water, on which the gentlemen could ſkate, and the ladies, without being inconvenienced by the cold, could enjoy a proſpect of the diverſion. Hither they repaired;—all eyes were charmed with the beauty, elegance, and comfort of the cottage; the gentlemen put on their ſkates, the ſervants were allowed to join them on the ice, and in a moment crowds ſet off. The beauty of thoſe whoſe movements were graceful and eaſy at this moſt delightful exerciſe, and the awkwardneſs and falls of thoſe who were not, added exceedingly to the diverſion of the company aſſembled in the cottage; when the gaiety of the day was in a moment clouded by an accident that might have proved fatal;—whether it was owing to the crowds on the ice, or the heat of the ſun, or the ſhelter, but let the cauſe originate from what it would, juſt as Mr. Beaumont, the Marquis, and Mr. Henry were coming round a conſiderable ſwell, cloſe to the banks, much before the reſt, one of the three fell, and diſappeared; the

the other two turned inſtantly on hearing the noiſe, and ſome of the ladies incautiouſly cried out—" Mr. Beaumont!" The Marquis and he were dreſſed in the ſame coloured flannel dreſſes, and black velvet hunting-caps; and being in ſize and height almoſt exactly the ſame, cauſed the miſtake: but it was the Marquis who fell.

By the activity of Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Henry he was ſoon got out of the water, but was very much cut in the head, and one of his hands by the fall. Help by this time arriving, Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Henry became uneaſy leſt Lady Middleton might be alarmed; and Mr. Beaumont ran as faſt as he could to relieve any fears ſhe might be in, not thinking of his dreſs being covered with blood, his cravat taken off to bind the Marquis's hand, and the boſom of his ſhirt alſo bloody.

She had been dreadfully alarmed at the moment of the fall, and became as pale

as

as death, ſitting trembling in almoſt a ſtate of inſenſibility.

Miſs Wilmot ran out the firſt to ſatisfy herſelf of the accident, and meeting Mr. Beaumont—"Fly, Sir!" ſaid ſhe; "Lady Middleton thinks it is you that have fallen."

He redoubled his ſpeed at this information, and ruſhed into the room.

"My Gertrude!" he exclaimed.

She caught the ſound; and ſeeing him all marked with blood, his hair clotted, as the Marquis lay againſt him, his cheeks beſmeared, and his whole figure terrific, ſhe ſcreamed, and fainted.

Such was the conſternation of every one preſent, that the figure of Mr. Beaumont never occurred to them to be the primary cauſe of her terror; and when ſhe recovered, and opened her eyes, upon finding the ſame object

object before them, ſhe relapſed again. It then ſtruck every one that ſhe was impreſſed with an idea of his being dreadfully wounded, and wondered they had not thought of that before; ſo that water being in the room, they waſhed his face, and tied a handkerchief round his neck, while he was almoſt as inſenſible as his Gertrude to what was doing. However, it had the happieſt effects; for when ſhe recovered, his mended appearance reſtored her more than any thing that could have been adminiſtered, and on being aſſured that nothing had happened to him, that it was the Marquis who had fallen, but had received no material injury, ſhe became perfectly compoſed, and ſoon after was well enough to be conveyed to the Abbey. She continued, however, for a few days ſo poorly that ſhe did not leave her room until dinner, and retired early to reſt.

A ſurgeon ſoon cured Lord Loveſdale's wounds, none of which were of any conſequence,

quence, yet required dreſſing; and as his face had not been marked, there was nothing to regret.

## CHAP. XII.

SOME days after this accident, Lady Middleton's ſtrength and ſpirits not being perfectly recovered, ſhe had not joined any party, but ſtrolled alone into the library, where ſhe found the newſpapers laying on the table untouched. She took up one; and looking over it, her own name ſtruck her eye, and on reading the paragraph, which was as follows, the reader my judge her ſurpriſe.

" The nuptial galas already announced to the public, ſtill continue at the ſeat of his Grace the Duke of Devon; but we are ſorry to add the gaiety of that noble manſion has been clouded for ſome days paſt from an accident that nearly proved fatal to one of the party. The Marquis of Loveſdale, notwithſtanding his ſcientific knowledge in the art of ſkating, flouriſhed a little too much, by which unſkilful manœuvre the ice broke, and his Lordſhip fell through it. By this unfortunate accident he was moſt ſeverely cut and bruiſed, of which, we are happy to add, he is in a fair way of recovery; but the charming *Lady Middleton* was ſo alarmed at the danger of the *Marquis*, that, after repeated and ſucceſſive faintings, ſhe was conveyed from the ſcene of action to the Abbey, and put to bed, where we are extremely ſorry to learn that the loſs of an heir to that illuſtrious Houſe has been the fatal conſequences of her

her Ladyſhip's *uncommon alarm!* However, ſhe is now reported to be in a tolerable ſtate of convaleſcence."

---

The face and neck of Lady Middleton, had there been any ſpectators preſent, would have diſcloſed the feelings of her heart; the bluſh of native modeſty coloured her cheek, the deep tinge of which was but juſt ſubſiding as Mrs. Markham entered the library from the ſame motive that carried her young friend there, that of paſſing an hour or two in ſtudy. Quick and penetrating, ſhe inſtantly perceived that ſomething had affected her.

"Has any thing happened, my beloved Gertrude?" ſaid this good woman; "you ſeem ill."

"Not ill," ſhe replied, "but ſurpriſed.—Read that paragraph, and it will account for any little agitation you perceive in my manner or appearance."

On

On Mrs. Markham's reading it—"Well, my love," ſaid ſhe, "one part we know is without the leaſt foundation; and the other, which is the production of malice and revenge, will ſoon be known to the world to be ſo."

"Certain words in the paragraph," replied Lady Middleton, "being in Italics, throw a meaning over the whole that ſhocks me to the ſoul;—theſe ugly inſinuations I own hurt me, though conſcious of my folly for being ſo."

"I conceive," ſaid Mrs. Markham, "the author to be no other than Lady Mary Berkley."

"It is that knowledge preciſely," ſaid Lady Middleton, "that doubly affects me.—Have I not reaſon to dread her machinations?—This is only a prelude to more of the ſame kind of invidious ſcandal."

"Which you are not ſufficiently light and faſhionable," returned Mrs. Markham, "to treat with the contempt it deſerves."

"I fear," ſaid Lady Middleton, ſmiling, "I never

" I never ſhall arrive at that happy ſtate of inſenſibility."

" Nor to the accommodating feelings of a modern fine lady," replied Mrs. Markham.

" Alas! no," rejoined Lady Middleton; " I feel the want of pliability on thoſe points prodigiouſly.—I know the delicacy of Lord Loveſdale is ſuch, that this will give him as much pain as it does me."

" We muſt prevent his ſeeing this paper," ſaid Mrs. Markham; " I ſuppoſe no other will take notice of it."

" If it was poſſible," ſaid Lady Middleton, " I am ſure it would be better."

The Marquis, however, had already ſeen it, for his own papers were aired by his gentleman before he had left his bed, and lay on his table ready for his peruſal during the time his hair was combing. He had long ſeen his own diſpoſition reflected in Lady Middleton, and by what he felt himſelf, he judged of her feelings.—He ſet it

it down to the account of Lady Mary Berkley.

"Yes, yes," ſaid he, "that devil has ſet the miſchief *en train*, and the ſucceſs of her experiments will be rapid."

Lady Mary Montreville had gabbled a good deal; ſhe could not conceive why the Marquis ſhould remain for ſo many months in the houſe of Lady Middleton. She had rejected his offer, and preferred Mr. Beaumont; yet ſhe wondered, for her part, for what purpoſe he could think of it; ſhe was ſurpriſed Mr. Beaumont ſuffered it, for really Lord Loveſdale was a very beautiful young man.

This goſſiping ſet others talking, ſo that Lady Mary Berkley had it not all to herſelf.

If the characters of both theſe women had been ſcanned by the public, their opinions

would not have had much weight, when contrafted with thofe they wifhed to vilify; yet the misfortune is, a tale of infamy, let it be ever fo unfounded, will always gain not only the ear, but the belief of the world, who will not be at the trouble of fatisfying itfelf of the truth, but implicitly give credit to, and retail it round their circle with the utmoft avidity.

How prone is human nature to this vice! It feems as if we gained by this conftant fnarl with each other, and by expofing the faults of others, reflected a double luftre on our own virtues.—Oh that thofe goffipers would occupy thofe hours in ftudy that they devote to detraction! That they would leave the mind no time to be idle, but, by rational and pleafing amufements, prevent thofe dangerous moments of laffitude, reftleffnefs, and diffatisfaction that naturally lead the mind, from vacancy, to find fault firft with themfelves, and then with the reft of the world; and to gratify a fpleen

a ſpleen to thoſe who never injured them, rail at and deſtroy not only the characters, but the peace of worth and virtue.

Hiſtory tells us of a wiſe and polite nation, that rejected a perſon of the firſt quality, who ſtood for a juſticiary office, only becauſe he had been obſerved in his youth to take a pleaſure in tearing and murdering birds; and of another that expelled a man from the ſenate for daſhing a bird againſt the ground that had taken ſhelter in his boſom.

Amongſt the wiſe laws of Lycurgus and Solon, we do not find any ſpecific proviſion againſt detraction.—Oh that the ſapient legiſlators of theſe realms would amend thoſe laws already in force for the protection of character, by making puniſhable thoſe invidious inſinuations, thoſe attacks that carry two meanings, thoſe nice diſtinctions of believing ſuch and ſuch things are well founded, but charity forbids more

to be ſaid on the ſubject—thoſe cautious ſtrokes of ſatire that leave the mind of the auditor buſy in ſearching into, and forming even more from them than they were intended to convey!

If that wiſe nation expelled a man from the ſenate for killing a bird which had taken refuge in his boſom, ought not all thoſe to be driven from ſociety who wantonly and inhumanly kill tenfold, by wounding us in the moſt tender part?—How often have innocence and virtue fled to the boſom of apparent friendſhip for aſſiſtance and conſolation, and at the moment of confidence, when the ſoul is poured out in the fulneſs of expected faith, the tale of miſery is expoſed to the comments of an unfeeling world, and actions, originating from the fineſt feelings and nobleſt ſentiments, are miſconſtrued according to the different modes of repreſentation, as they rapidly travel through innumerable channels, each making their own additions and alterations

as

as may beſt ſuit their diſpoſitions and abilities.

With what energy, what ſtrength of language does the immortal Shakeſpeare ſpeak of detraction!—

" Who ſteals my purſe, ſteals traſh; 'tis ſomething, nothing;
" 'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been ſlave to thouſands;
" But he that filches from me my good name,
" Robs me of that which not enriches him,
" And makes me poor indeed!"

In the life of Cato, the Cenſor, he takes occaſion, from the ſevere diſpoſition of man, to diſcourſe in this manner.—" It ought to be eſteemed a happineſs to mankind that our humanity has a wider ſphere to exert itſelf than bare juſtice; it is no more than the obligation of our very birth, to practiſe equity to our kind, but humanity may be extended through the whole order of creatures, even to the meaneſt;

ſuch actions of charity are the overflowings of a mild good-nature on all below us."

Humanity, that nobleſt principle of the human mind, while it teaches us the principal duties, ſhould ſave us by its divine influence from detraction. How many are there whoſe delicacy and humanity would be ſhocked at killing a bird, at hurting an innocent lamb, who would turn ſick at the ſight of death, though even of one of thoſe creatures cuſtom has reconciled us to devour! How many fine ladies faint, from exceſs of ſenſibility, at ſeeing a favourite lap-dog receive an accidental injury, and yet how few of thoſe of this very deſcription, that are conſidered to poſſeſs real humanity, are not guilty of detraction—that imbibe half the pleaſure they enjoy from propagating ſcandal; and in theſe unſubſtantial and evaneſcent pleaſures paſs their lives, without once reflecting on the daily miſchiefs they practiſe on the unſuſpecting and innocent! If the

the vicious, the illiberal, and incorrect were alone to ſuffer, the evil would not be ſo much to be lamented; but when a being ſo perfect as Lady Middleton comes under the laſh of cenſure, ſhe who may be conſidered as among the favourites of Nature, enriched with ſuch endowments and excellencies, as to place her above the common rate of humanity, we pity the depravity of human nature, and ſicken at the intercourſe we are obliged to form with ſuch a world.

From the mild virtues of Lord Loveſdale, it is eaſy to conceive how much he felt from ſuch inſinuations getting into the public prints.

"Is this then," ſaid he, "the end of all? Has a ſelfiſh gratification brought a ſuſpicion on me I would die rather than give juſt cauſe for? Shall I appear in public as one of Lady Middleton's party? If I do, the eye of malice will conſtrue every look, every word

word to our mutual diſadvantage: if I abſent myſelf, it will have as dangerous a tendency."

The Marquis's feelings were of too nice a texture to brave the opinion of the world; he was ſo much above the high poliſh of faſhion, that pernicious gallantry could not meet a ſanction in his breaſt. He ſought Mr. Beaumont, who laughed at the malice of the author, and uſed every argument to ſet his friend at reſt;—they both converſed with Lady Middleton on the ſubject; and this confidence lightened the weight that preſſed heavily on the heart of the Marquis.

A very few days were to ſee them in London, on that great theatre where ſo many have been wrecked, and where ſo few that move in the upper regions of faſhion, preſerve that peace of mind and innocence of conduct which alone can enſure us real felicity.

We

We now beg leave to look back upon the time that Lord Loveſdale and Mr. Beaumont arrived at the Abbey of Devon, after the impriſonment of the latter, and to that part of the evening that his Lordſhip mentioned the name of Baggot to Lady Mary Berkley, and the ſevere effect it had upon her, the violence of which plainly ſhews the nature of her connection muſt have been very uncommon and extraordinary, that the bare mention of his name ſhould bring on a real bodily diſeaſe; for though I am very unwilling to acknowledge it, there are ſome of the female world in love affairs, and on other occaſions, can put on the ſemblance of illneſs ſo as to deceive the niceſt obſerver: but we are happy to allow ſo much merit to Lady Mary Berkley, that her feelings on hearing the name of Baggot were real and ſtrong, and were productive of that fever which has been already recorded.

It muſt be confeſſed ſurpriſing to a great degree,

degree, that a woman who has not ſhewn much ſenſibility on other occaſions, could diſcover ſo much on this; it leaves a mixture of aſtoniſhment and curioſity on the mind, and a very great deſire to know the cauſe. However, as the ſecret ſeemed only to be known to the Marquis and her Ladyſhip, we were never able to develope the myſtery; if time, however, ſhould unfold the darkneſs it is wrapped in, we pledge ourſelves to give it to the public. Thus far we learn, that the Honourable Mr. Baggot died at Nice, after an illneſs the moſt excruciating, which was ſuppoſed to be brought on by having, unknown to himſelf, taken poiſon. He lingered more than two months, during all which time he ſuffered uncommon tortures, and all the natural effects of poiſon were viſible, but of a kind ſlow in its operations.

Let Lady Mary Berkley's feelings originate from what ſource they might, certain it is the Marquis's knowledge of this affair made

made her determine on the future conduct of her life; and, upon mature consideration, she devoted it to that mode most suited to her disposition.

As soon as she recovered from her illness sufficiently to write, she addressed her friend Mrs. Marchmont, and finally settled every preliminary for a fixed residence in her house.

END OF VOL. II.

LANE, MINERVA-PRESS, LEADENHALL-STREET.

*Just published,*

MAD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN,

IN TWO VOLUMES, 12MO.

*Price 7s. sewed.*

This book is given special protection for the reason